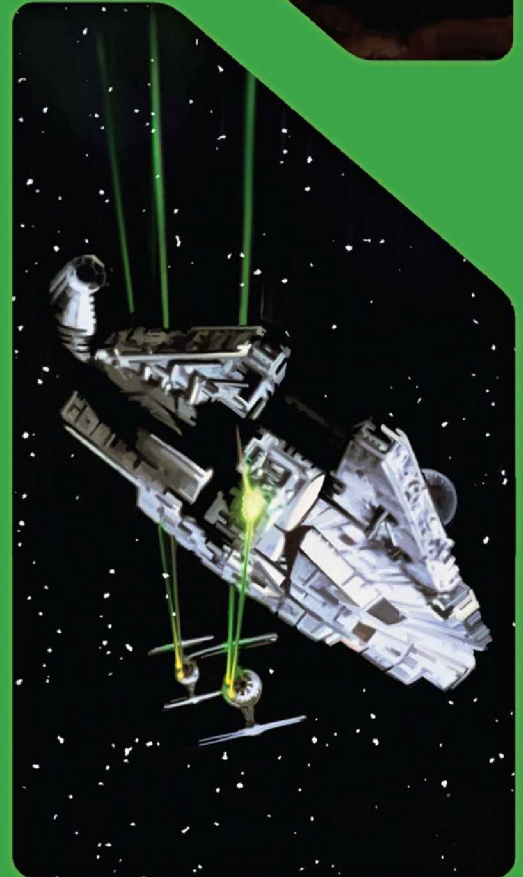
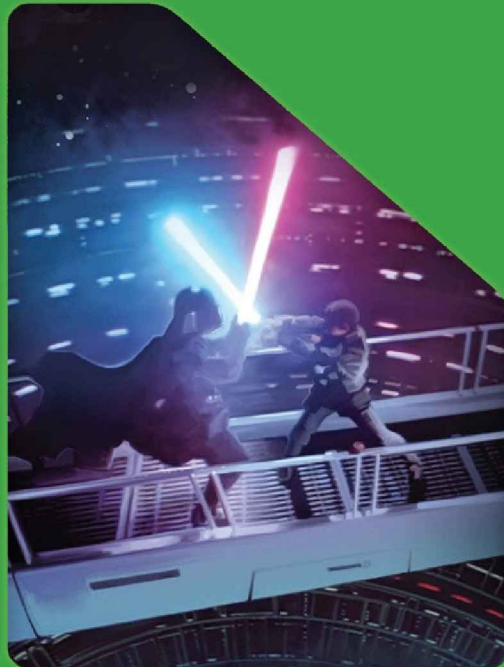
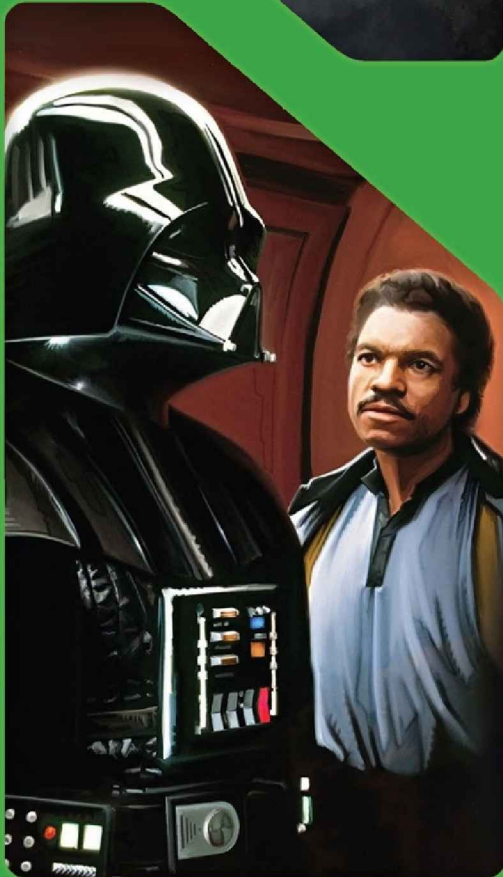




STAR WARS

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK



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Disney • Lucasfilm Press, 1101 Flower Street, Glendale, California 91201.

"Survival on Hoth" written by Ivan Cohen

"AT-AT Attack!" written by Andy Schmidt

"An Unusual Hiding Place" written by Calliope Glass

"Size Matters Not" written by Calliope Glass

"Betrayal at Bespin" written by Michael Siglain

"The Revelation" written by Trey King

ISBN 978-1-4847-1196-5

Visit the official *Star Wars* website at: www.starwars.com

STAR WARS®

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

Based on the story and screenplay by
George Lucas

Illustrations by
Brian Rood

Disney

LUCASFILM

PRESS

Los Angeles • New York



Survival on Hoth



It was a dark time for the Rebellion. Although the Death Star had been destroyed, the Empire's troops had driven the Rebel forces from their hidden base and pursued them across the galaxy.

Evading the Imperial starfleet, a group of freedom fighters led by Luke Skywalker established a new secret base on the remote ice world of Hoth.

But Darth Vader had dispatched thousands of remote probes into the far reaches of space, searching for young Skywalker and his allies.





On the frozen surface of Hoth, a blast from the sky shattered the silence and an Imperial probe rose from the icy ground.

Nearby, Luke Skywalker was riding a tauntaun—one of the few animals tough enough to

survive the intense cold of Hoth—when he heard the loud noise.

He searched the landscape for signs of whatever had caused the explosion, but he couldn't see anything.

Luke thought it must have been a meteorite falling from space.





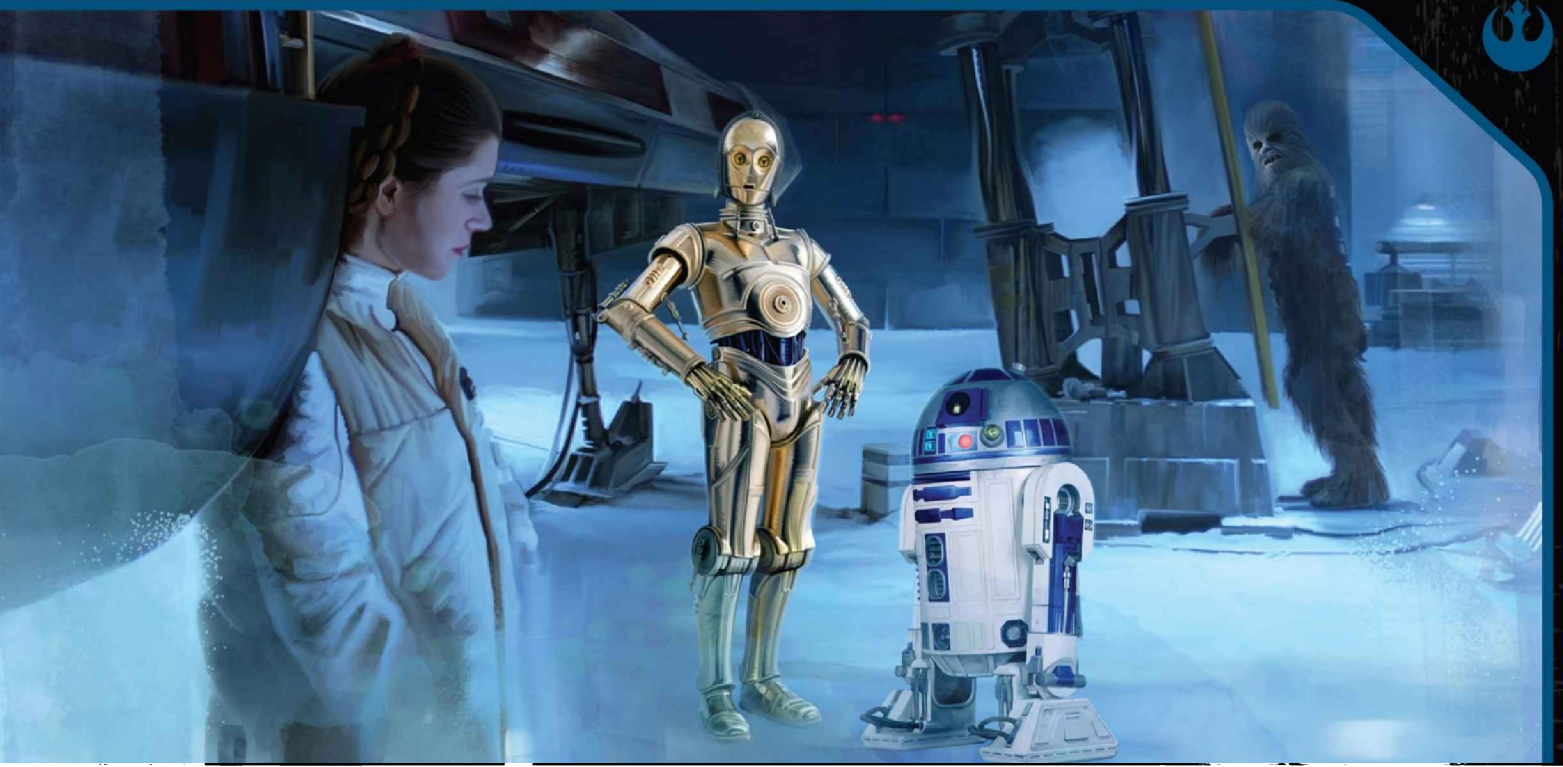
Using his communicator, Luke checked in with his friend Han Solo. “Han, do you read me? There’s a meteorite that hit the ground near here. I want to check it out.”

As Luke turned off his communicator, his tauntaun began bucking and moaning in a panic. Then a huge furry beast leaped up out of nowhere, knocking both Luke and the tauntaun down and dragging them away! Before Luke blacked out, he recognized the beast—a wampa!

Meanwhile, at the Rebel base, Han and his friend Chewbacca were preparing their ship, the *Millennium Falcon*, for a long journey.

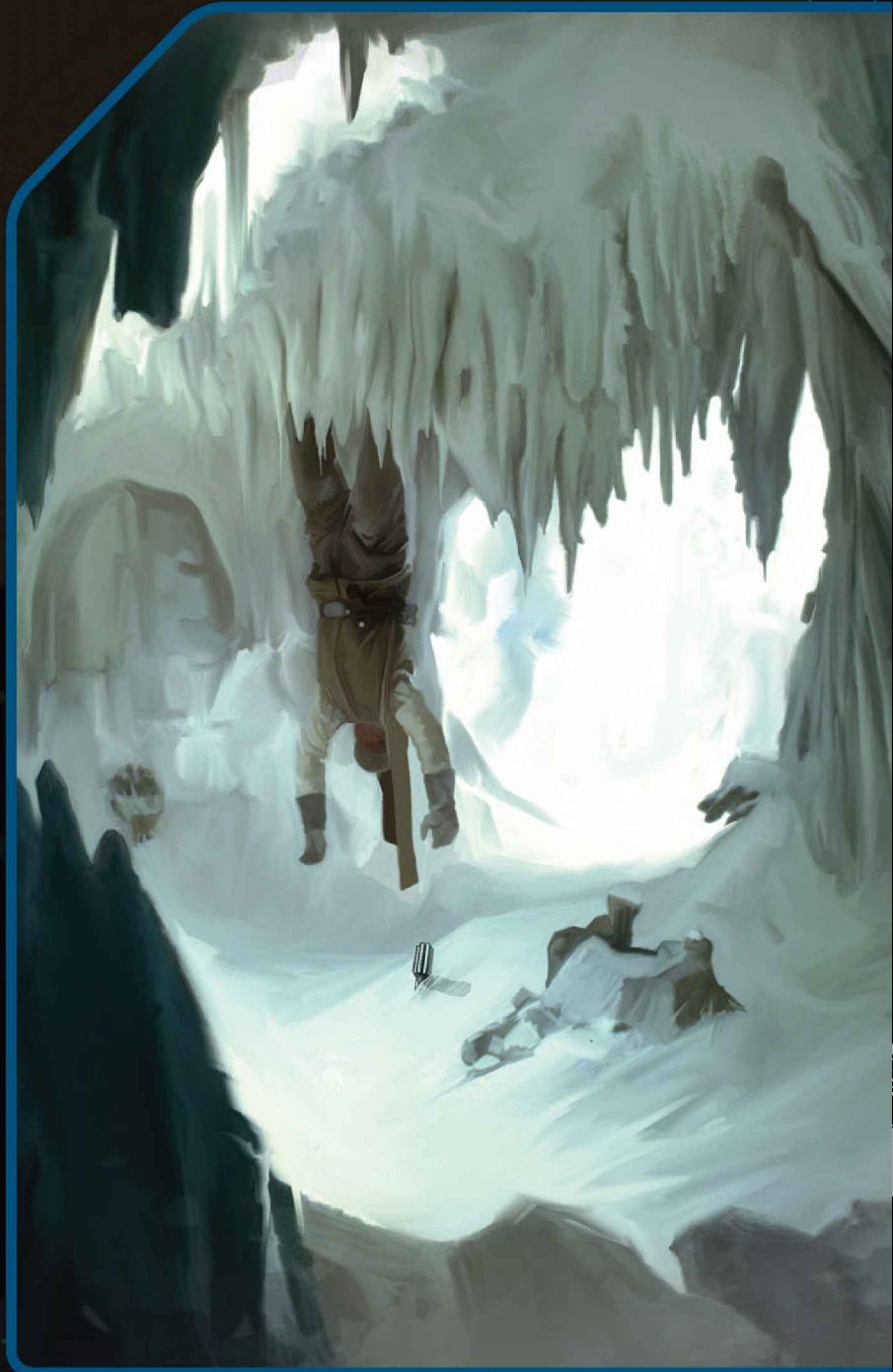
“If I don’t pay off what I owe Jabba the Hutt, I’m a dead man,” Han told Leia.

The couple were deep in conversation when R2-D2 and C-3PO interrupted them. The droids were concerned that Luke had yet to return from his search. “Nobody knows where he is. I think Master Luke is in considerable danger,” said C-3PO.



C-3PO had no idea how right he was about Luke, who woke up to find himself hanging upside down in the wampa's lair! The beast was messily eating what was left of Luke's tauntaun. When it was finished, the wampa would probably come after Luke for dessert!

Luke needed to get free and escape the wampa's clutches. But he would need his lightsaber, which was on the ground beneath him, just out of arm's reach.





While he struggled to grab the weapon with his hands, Luke remembered what Obi-Wan Kenobi had taught him as part of his Jedi Knight training. Closing his eyes, Luke concentrated on using the Force—the energy that binds the universe together—and the lightsaber began to shake!

Having finished feasting on the tauntaun, the wampa grunted hungrily and rose to its feet, heading straight for Luke!

Before the wampa could get to him, the lightsaber flew into Luke's hand! With a swift motion, Luke cut his bonds and leaped to his feet.

As the wampa roared at Luke, the young Jedi slashed at the creature with his lightsaber, cutting off one of its paws! Luke ran from the cave and stumbled into the snow outside.

But it was getting dark, and the brutal cold made it hard for Luke to stay awake. In a matter of moments, Luke fell to the icy ground. Struggling to his feet, he stumbled forward, but he could only go a few steps before falling again.



Barely conscious, Luke heard a familiar voice calling his name.

Luke, a calm voice said, echoing in his mind. He recognized the voice.

“Ben?” he gasped. It was his teacher, Obi-Wan Kenobi.



Obi-Wan's ghostly image appeared before him. "You will go to the Dagobah system. There you will learn from Yoda, the Jedi Master who instructed me."

Meanwhile, Han Solo was worried because Luke had been gone for so long. It was getting late, and there was little hope that anyone could survive the cold night. Risking his own safety, Han took his tauntaun and rode out to search for Luke.

Hours later, R2-D2's scanners couldn't find Han or Luke. Leia wanted to keep the outer doors open for her missing friends, but she knew she couldn't. A terrible storm was coming, and she had to protect the base.



“Don’t worry about Master Luke,” said C-3PO. “I’m sure he’ll be all right. He’s quite clever, you know, for a human being.”

Chewbacca moaned with sorrow as the base’s doors slammed shut. There would be no way to help Han or Luke until the morning, and they might not be able to last that long.







It was almost too dark to see by the time Han and his tauntaun found Luke. Han quickly dismounted and ran to his friend's side. "Luke!"

Han was overjoyed to find his friend, but there was a problem: Han's tauntaun had been pushed past its limits. It gave a last desperate bray before falling down, dead.

Now they had no way to get back to base. And the cold would be too much for Luke in his weakened condition.

Han took Luke's lightsaber and used it to slice open the tauntaun. Then he wrapped its hide around Luke's body.

"This may smell bad, kid," explained Han, "but it'll keep you warm until I get the shelter up."

By the next morning, the storm had passed. Leia immediately sent out scout ships to bring Han and Luke home. Han waved to a scout ship as it passed above him. "Good morning. Nice of you guys to drop by!"

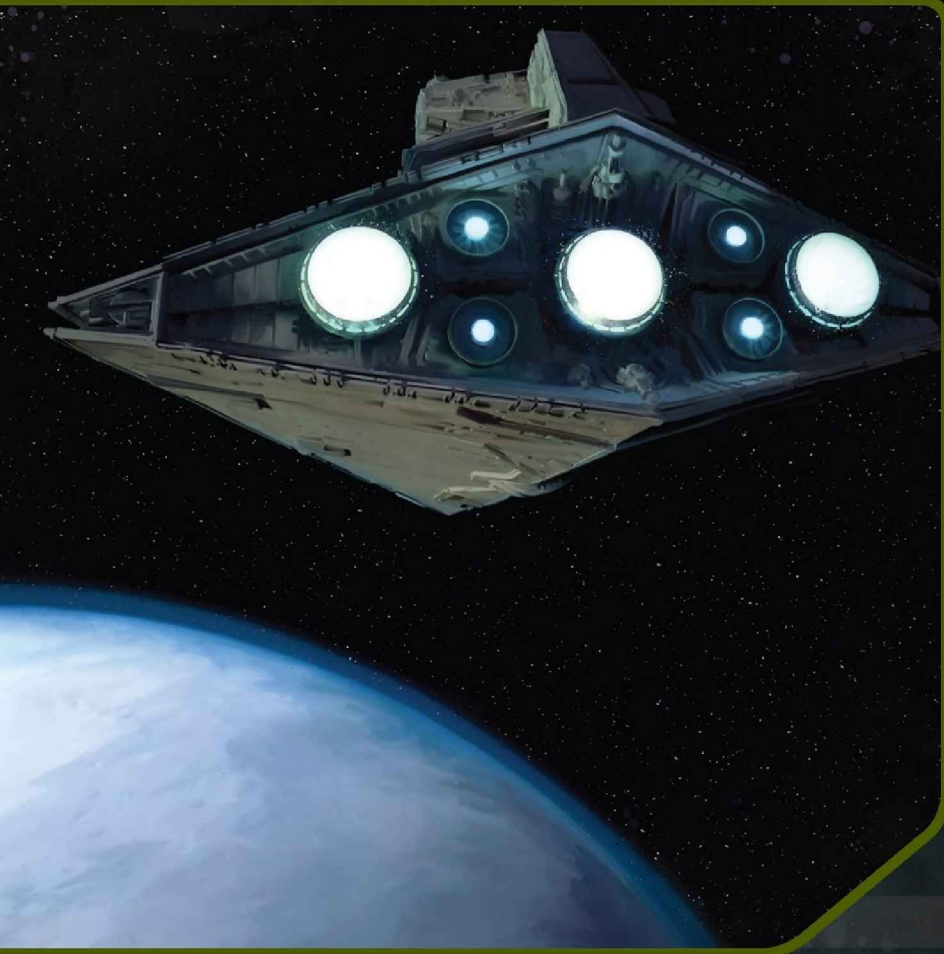


Luke awoke to find himself in the Rebel base's infirmary, surrounded by his friends. He had made it through the night because of Han's bravery, but there wasn't any time to rest.

Luke now had a new mission: he was going to find the Jedi Master Yoda and learn more about the power of the Force. As a true Jedi Knight, Luke would join his friends in battle against Darth Vader and defeat the Empire, restoring hope to the galaxy once and for all.



AT-AT Attack!



Luke Skywalker wasn't always a Jedi Knight defending the galaxy against Darth Vader and the evil Empire. He was raised as a farmer. There were many ways that someone could fight the Empire. Luke would decide between becoming a soldier and

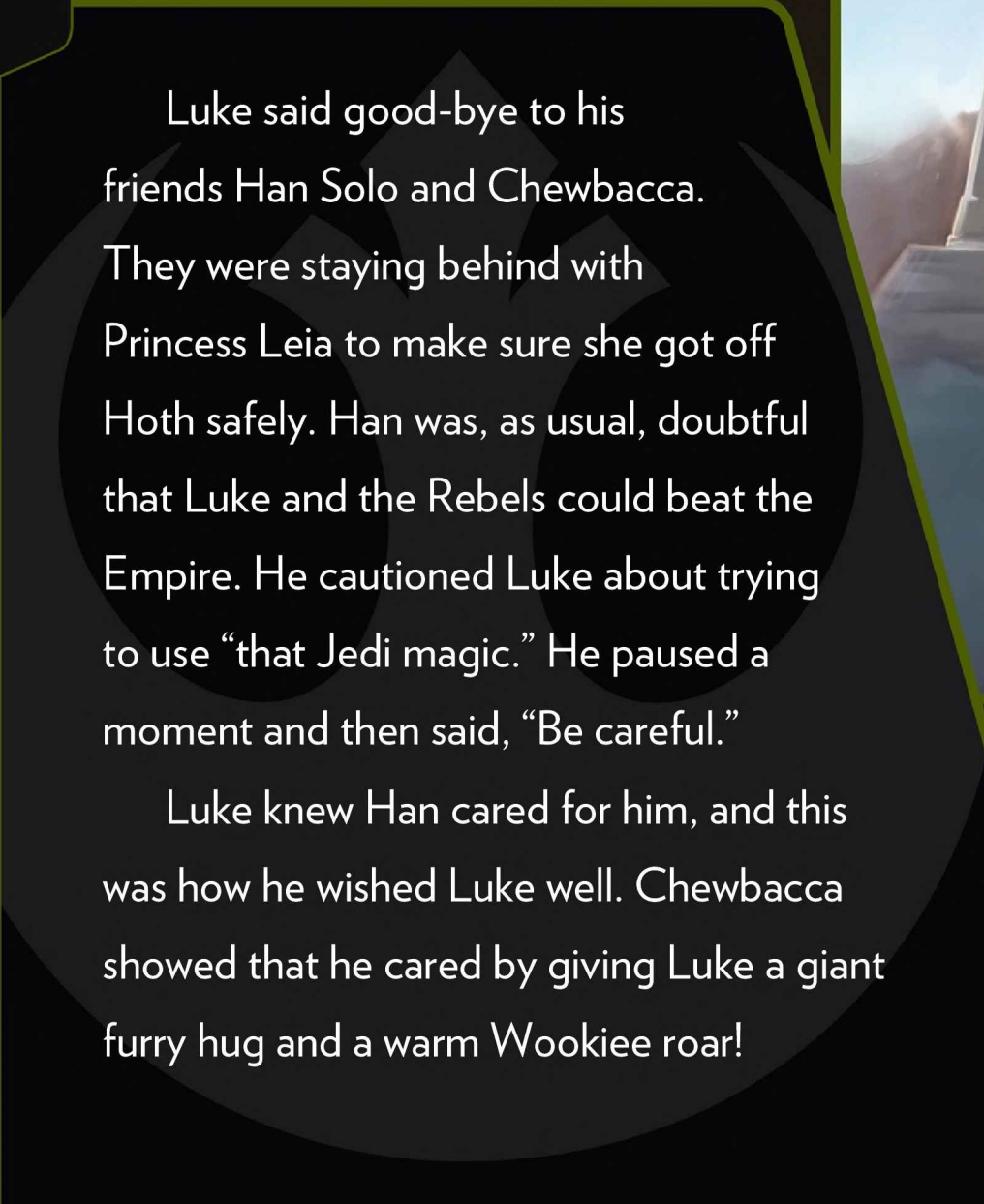
fighting as a Jedi Knight on a frozen planet called Hoth.

Luke and his friends were hiding in a Rebel base on Hoth when Darth Vader found their hideout. Vader ordered his troops to attack the Rebels.

The alarm sounded, and Luke quickly put on his pilot suit and left the medical bay. Not thinking about it, Luke took his lightsaber—the weapon of the Jedi Knights—with him, even though it could not help him pilot his snowspeeder during the attack.

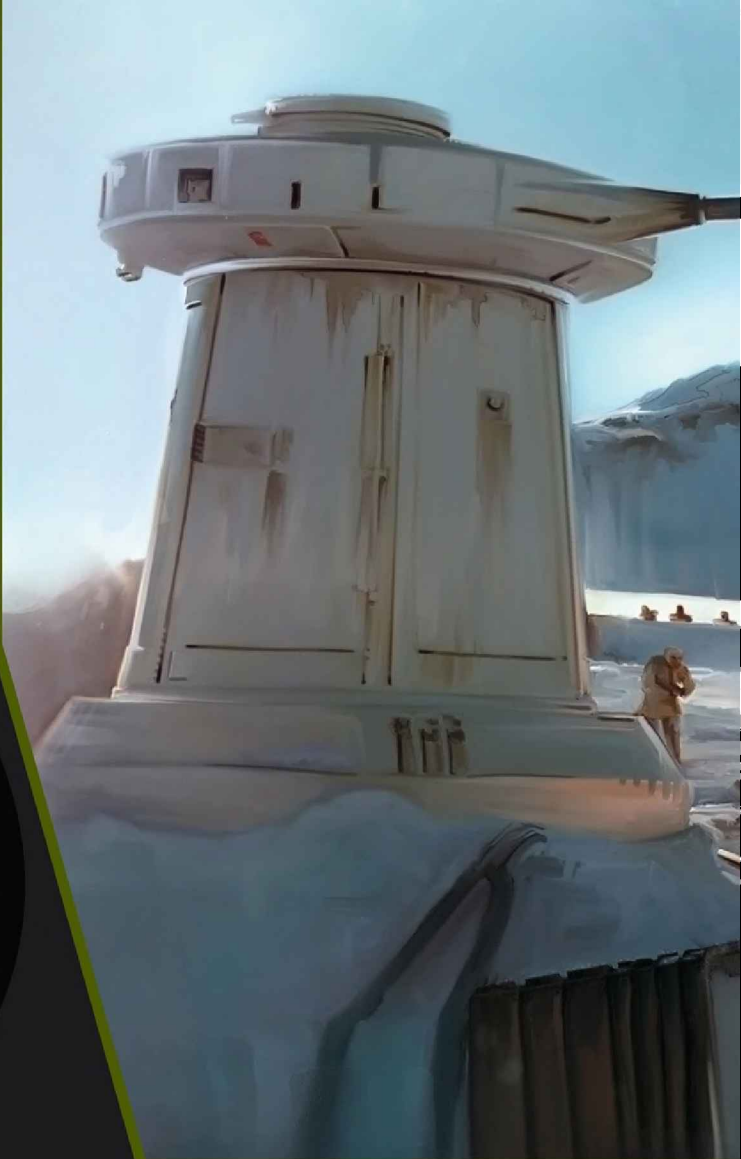
Luke remembered that Obi-Wan Kenobi had recently appeared to him—had he been a ghost?—and told him to go to the planet Dagobah, where Luke would find Yoda, a powerful Jedi Master. Luke shook his head. He needed to focus on that day's battle and worry about Dagobah later.





Luke said good-bye to his friends Han Solo and Chewbacca. They were staying behind with Princess Leia to make sure she got off Hoth safely. Han was, as usual, doubtful that Luke and the Rebels could beat the Empire. He cautioned Luke about trying to use “that Jedi magic.” He paused a moment and then said, “Be careful.”

Luke knew Han cared for him, and this was how he wished Luke well. Chewbacca showed that he cared by giving Luke a giant furry hug and a warm Wookiee roar!





Luke boarded his snowspeeder as the rest of the Rebels set up defensive cannons in the snow.

They all waited quietly for the attack they knew was coming. Finally, they saw what the Empire had sent to fight them—giant metal monsters that walked on four legs! The All Terrain Armored Transports—AT-AT walkers!



A T - A T A T T A C K !

In their flying snowspeeders, Luke Skywalker and Rogue Squadron attacked the AT-AT walkers. But their blaster fire bounced off the AT-ATs. It didn't even slow them down!

“That armor's too strong for blasters,” Luke said as he came up with a different plan to stop the giant foes!

Luke called his fellow pilots over the radio: “Use your harpoons and tow cables. Go for the legs. It might be our only chance of stopping them.” Luke's team followed his plan, shooting cables around one of the AT-AT's legs, causing it to stumble and . . .



STAR WARS STORYBOOK COLLECTION



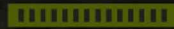
... fall!

One AT-AT down! The troops inside the Rebel base cheered as Luke's squad held off the AT-ATs. They might escape after all!

The second AT-AT was destroyed, but soon so was most of Rogue Squadron. Luke was one of the last pilots left, and he still needed to take down the final AT-AT. It was the only way Princess Leia and his friends could safely escape before Darth Vader arrived!

Just as Luke circled around for another attack, the Rebels were told that Darth Vader had entered the base! Han Solo, no longer willing to wait for Princess Leia to finish helping with the evacuation, pulled her aside. "Come on. That's it," Han said. Leia turned to her last soldiers and told them to get off Hoth safely.





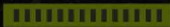
Han, Chewbacca, C-3PO, and Princess Leia all boarded Han's famous ship, the *Millennium Falcon*. Han knew they would make it . . . as long as Luke stopped that AT-AT outside!

But they couldn't wait any longer. Han shouted to Chewie, "Punch it!" The *Millennium Falcon*'s engines blasted to life, and the ship darted toward the exit!





As Luke flew toward the AT-AT, his snowspeeder was hit. Luke was going down! He struggled to eject! Just as the AT-AT's giant foot stomped on the vehicle, Luke jumped into the snow. With his snowspeeder destroyed and no blaster powerful enough to pierce the AT-AT's armor, all Luke had left was his willpower, a grappling hook, a grenade, and . . . his lightsaber. *But what can a lightsaber do against an AT-AT?* Luke thought.




Luke picked himself up out of the snow and concentrated. He drew on the Force to help him run more quickly than ever before, and caught up with the AT-AT. He fired his grappling cable at the underside of the AT-AT and used it to pull himself up to the belly of the beast!



As Luke approached, he wondered how he would get through that armor. And then he remembered the first thing Obi-Wan had ever told him about a lightsaber: “This is the weapon of a Jedi Knight, not as clumsy or random as a blaster. An elegant weapon, for a more civilized age.” At the time, he had had no idea how much that lightsaber would change his life forever.







Luke ignited his lightsaber and slashed through the AT-AT's armor, creating a hole in the AT-AT's belly. He threw a grenade into the opening and dropped from his cable all the way down into the snow!

Luke, exhausted from the effort, remained in the snow, waiting for the . . . *BOOM!*

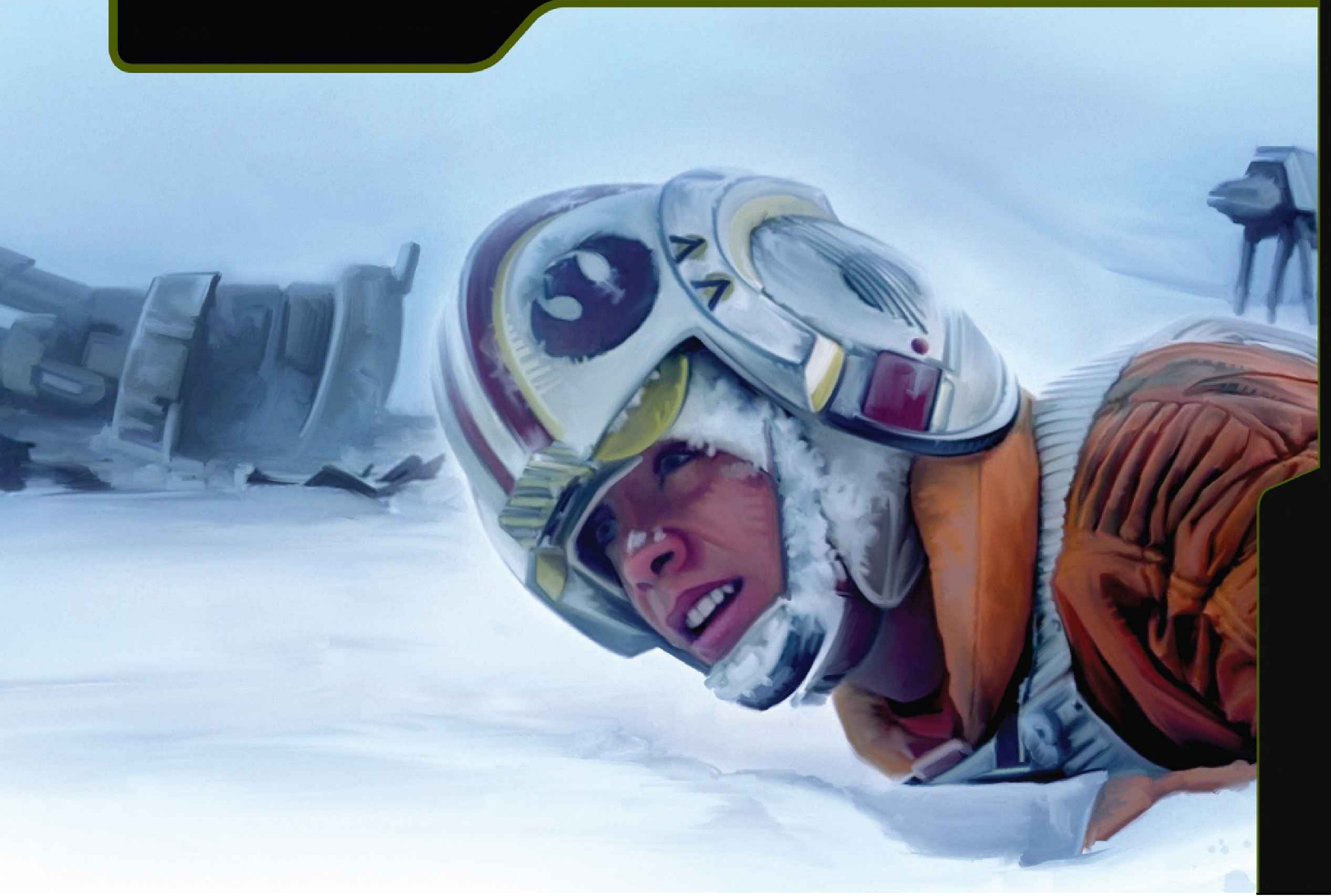
The AT-AT exploded, crumpling to the snow-covered ground. He'd done it!

Luke watched as the *Millennium Falcon* zoomed by him and into outer space. He was happy to know that his friends Han Solo and Princess Leia were safe.

Darth Vader finished his search of the Rebel base and found it empty. He was outraged that he'd missed his prey! But there would be another time and another fight. Darth Vader was as patient as he was deadly. . . .

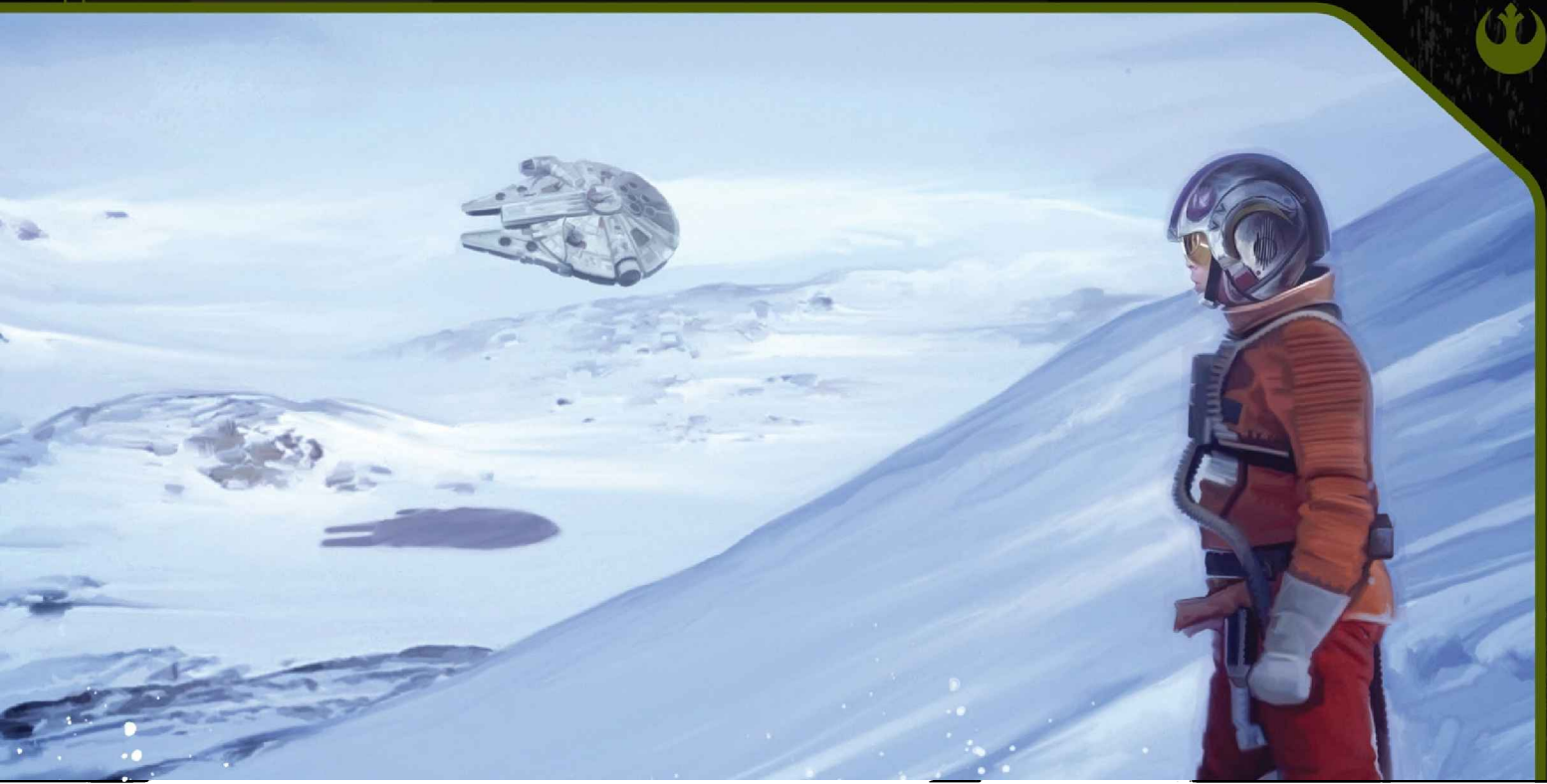


Luke looked down at the lightsaber in his hand. He realized that when his snowspeeder had crashed and his back had been against the wall, it was his lightsaber—the weapon of the Jedi Knights—that had saved his life and those of his friends aboard the *Millennium Falcon*.




With the AT-AT attack thwarted and his friends heading away from Hoth in the *Millennium Falcon*, Luke was free to choose between becoming a soldier and becoming a Jedi Knight.

That day on Hoth, any one of the soldiers in the Rebel Alliance would have said they needed more soldiers, but Luke knew it was the power of the Jedi that had saved them. With that last thought in his mind, Luke set his course for Dagobah to find the wise Jedi Master Yoda. Luke would one day become the greatest of Jedi Knights.





An Unusual Hiding Place

The background of the entire page is a cinematic illustration of the Millennium Falcon flying through a dark, stormy sky above the ice planet Hoth. The Falcon is seen from a low angle, moving towards the right. In the background, the jagged, snow-covered peaks of Hoth are visible under a purple and blue twilight sky. A large, white, circular structure, likely a Rebel base, is partially visible in the distance.

A battle raged in the skies above the ice planet Hoth. The Empire had discovered the Rebel base there and attacked it, leaving the Rebels no choice but to flee. Dodging laser blasts, Han Solo piloted the *Millennium Falcon* up and away from the base with help from Chewbacca, his Wookiee copilot.

Chewie roared a warning.

“I saw them!” Han said.

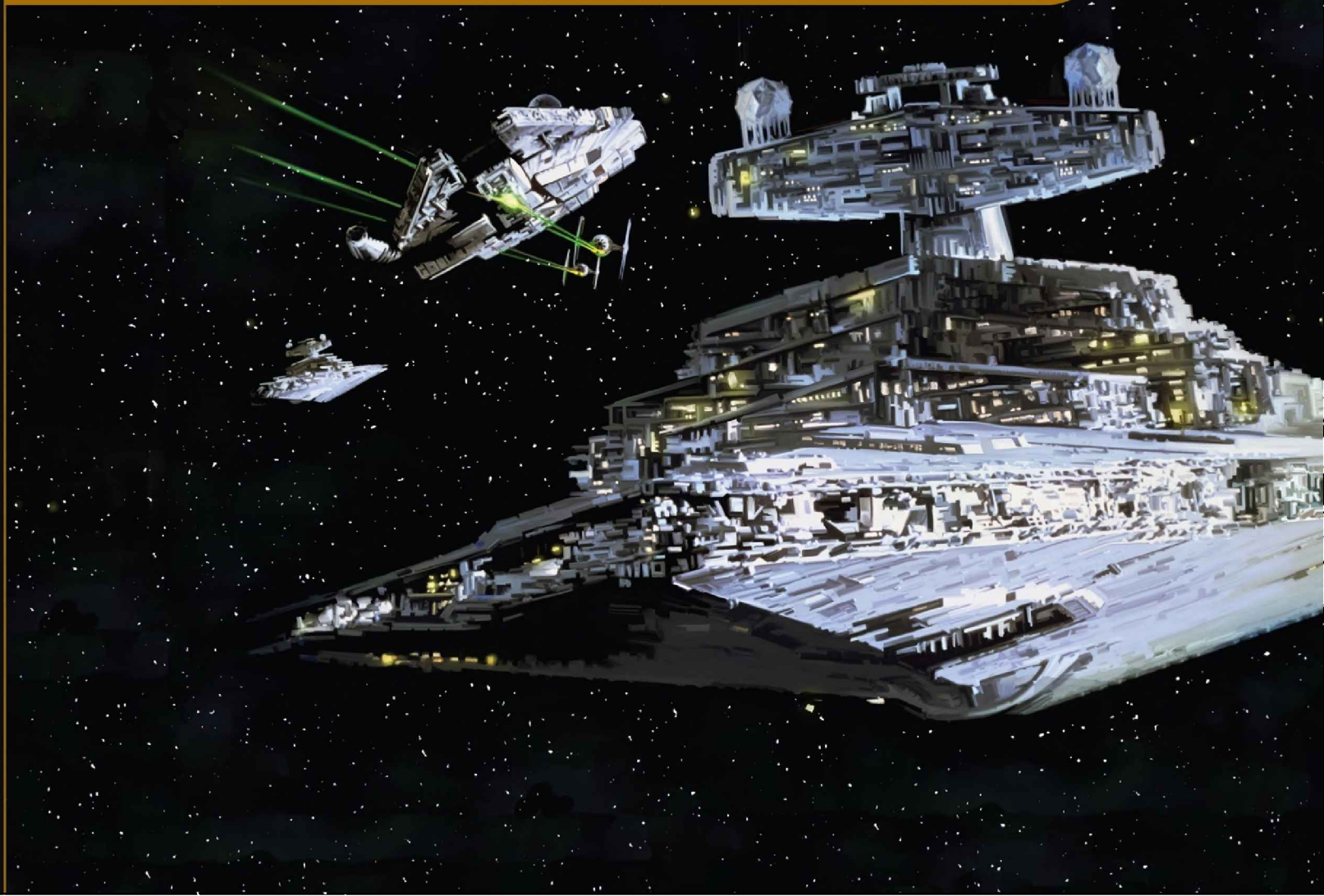
“Saw what?” Princess Leia asked. She and C-3PO, the protocol droid, were passengers on the *Millennium Falcon*.



“Star Destroyers!” Han replied. “Two of them, coming right at us.”

The Imperial Star Destroyers chased the *Millennium Falcon* through space. Smaller TIE fighters swarmed toward Han’s ship.

“They’re getting closer!” Leia said.





But Han knew they weren't beaten yet. "Oh, yeah?" he said. "Watch this."

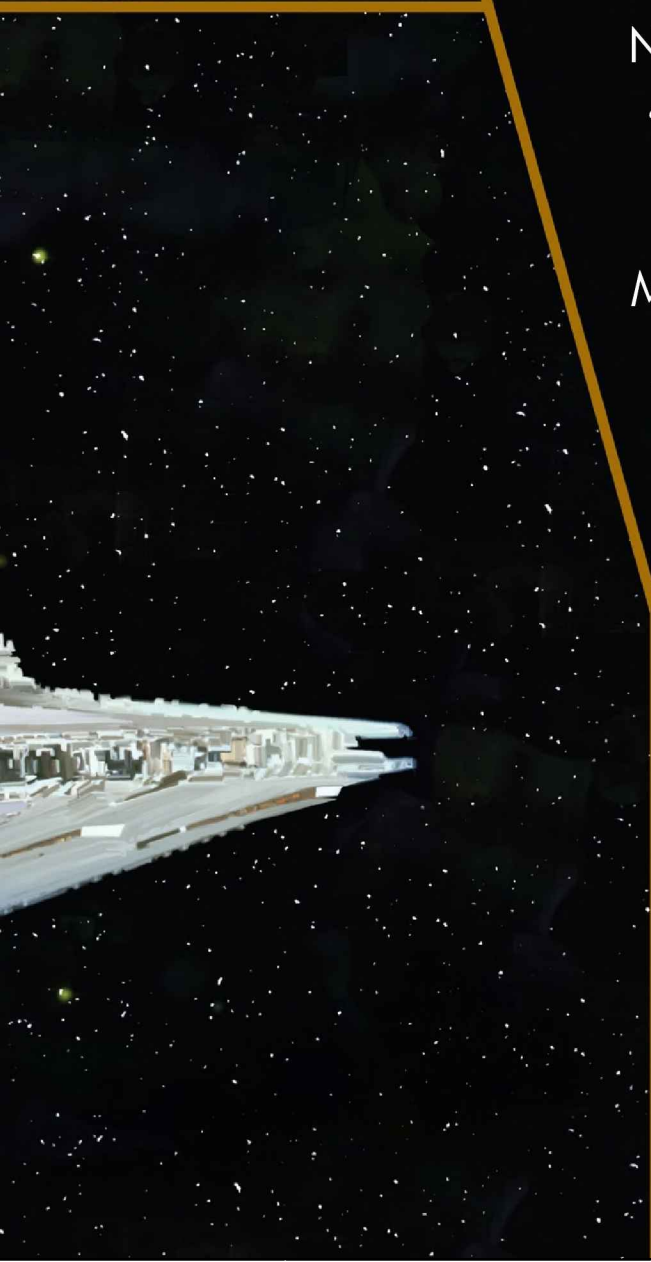
He turned on the hyperdrive.

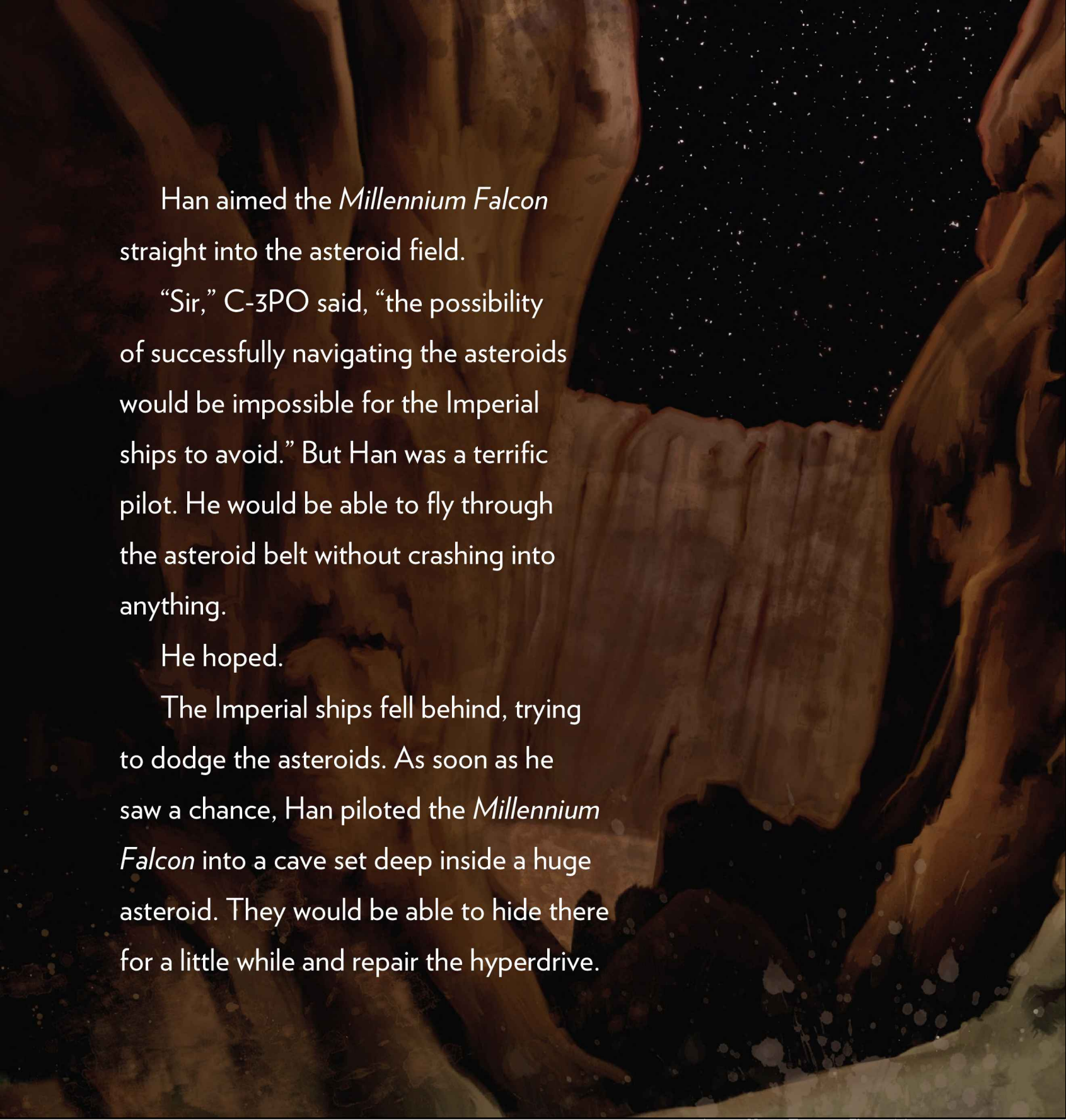
Nothing happened.

"I think we're in trouble," Han said.

The ship's hyperdrive was broken. The *Millennium Falcon* couldn't go to lightspeed . . . and the Imperial ships were gaining on them! Han and Chewie rushed to fix the ship, but then something hit the *Falcon*—something that wasn't a laser blast.

"Asteroids!" Leia said. They were flying straight into an asteroid field. Huge rocks sailed by them. Han and Chewie steered the *Falcon* around the asteroids, trying not to crash.





Han aimed the *Millennium Falcon* straight into the asteroid field.

“Sir,” C-3PO said, “the possibility of successfully navigating the asteroids would be impossible for the Imperial ships to avoid.” But Han was a terrific pilot. He would be able to fly through the asteroid belt without crashing into anything.

He hoped.

The Imperial ships fell behind, trying to dodge the asteroids. As soon as he saw a chance, Han piloted the *Millennium Falcon* into a cave set deep inside a huge asteroid. They would be able to hide there for a little while and repair the hyperdrive.



C-3PO and Chewbacca got to work on the hyperdrive. In no time the *Millennium Falcon* was all fixed up. Then the crew heard strange noises from outside the ship. Han, Leia, and Chewie went into the cave to investigate.

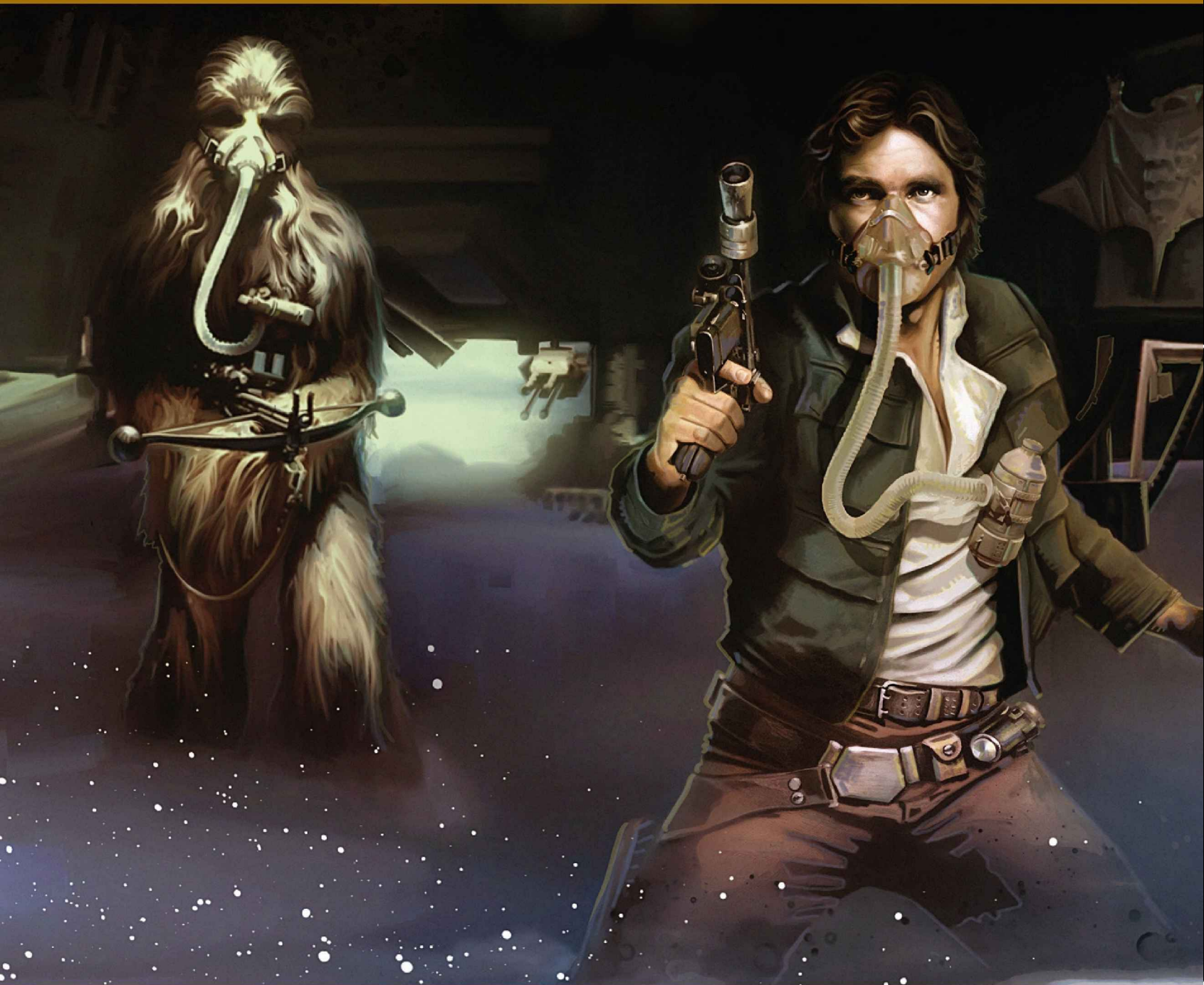
Suddenly, a swarm of pale leathery creatures flew past them.

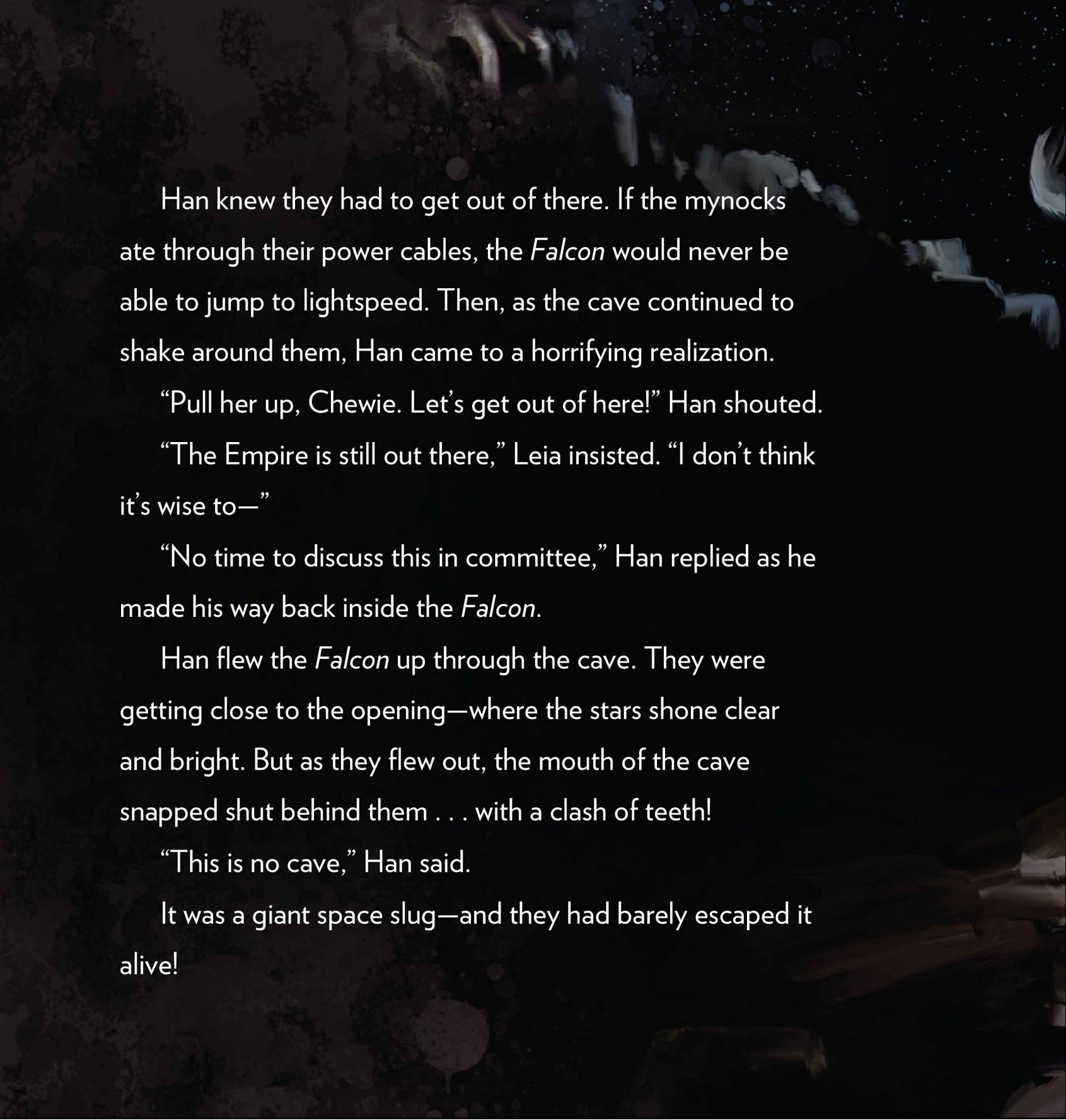
“Watch out!” Han shouted. He recognized the huge batlike pests. They were called mynocks, and they had a habit of chewing on starship power cables. Han shot at one of them, and the whole cave jolted and shuddered.

Han looked around. It was as if the cave walls had felt the shot.



AN UNUSUAL HIDING PLACE





Han knew they had to get out of there. If the mynocks ate through their power cables, the *Falcon* would never be able to jump to lightspeed. Then, as the cave continued to shake around them, Han came to a horrifying realization.

“Pull her up, Chewie. Let’s get out of here!” Han shouted.

“The Empire is still out there,” Leia insisted. “I don’t think it’s wise to—”


“No time to discuss this in committee,” Han replied as he made his way back inside the *Falcon*.

Han flew the *Falcon* up through the cave. They were getting close to the opening—where the stars shone clear and bright. But as they flew out, the mouth of the cave snapped shut behind them . . . with a clash of teeth!

“This is no cave,” Han said.

It was a giant space slug—and they had barely escaped it alive!





The Imperial ships were still in the asteroid field, waiting for the *Millennium Falcon* to come out of hiding. Luckily, the *Falcon*'s crew had repaired its hyperdrive while they were hiding inside the space slug.

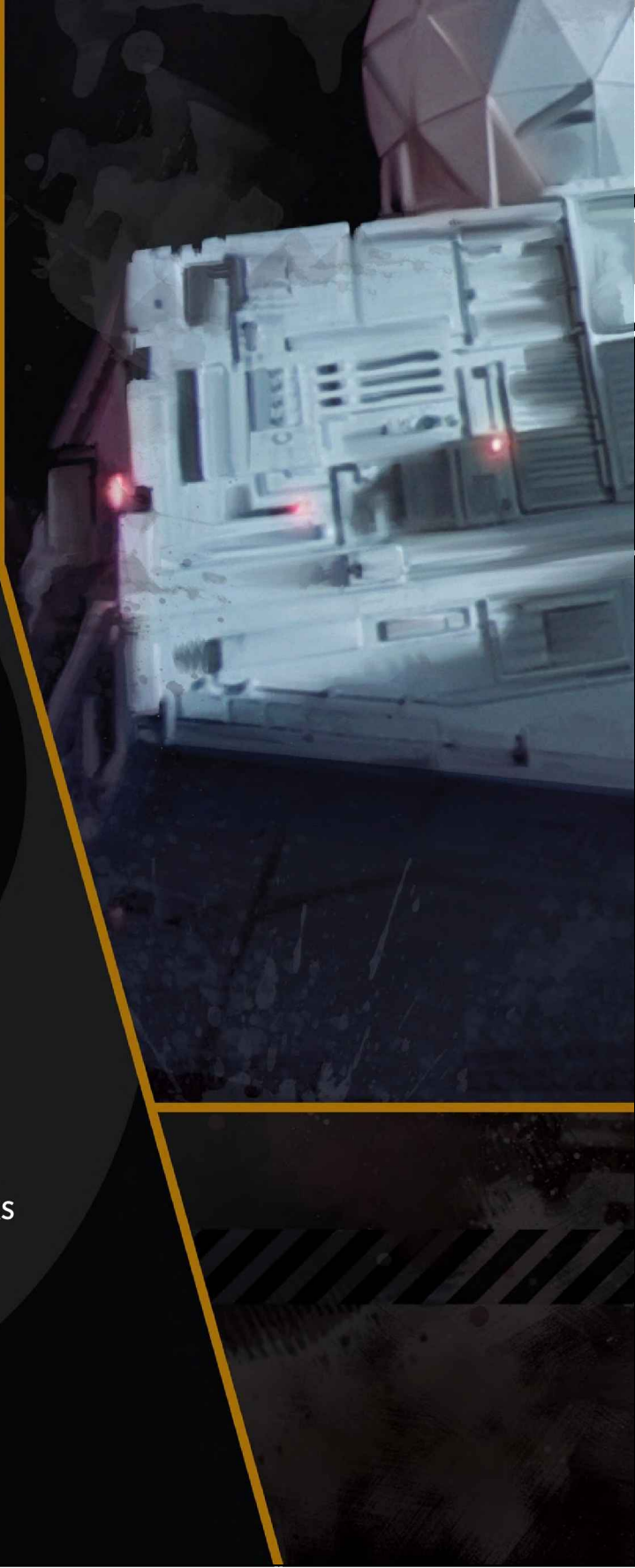
“Let’s get out of here,” Han said.
“Ready for lightspeed?”

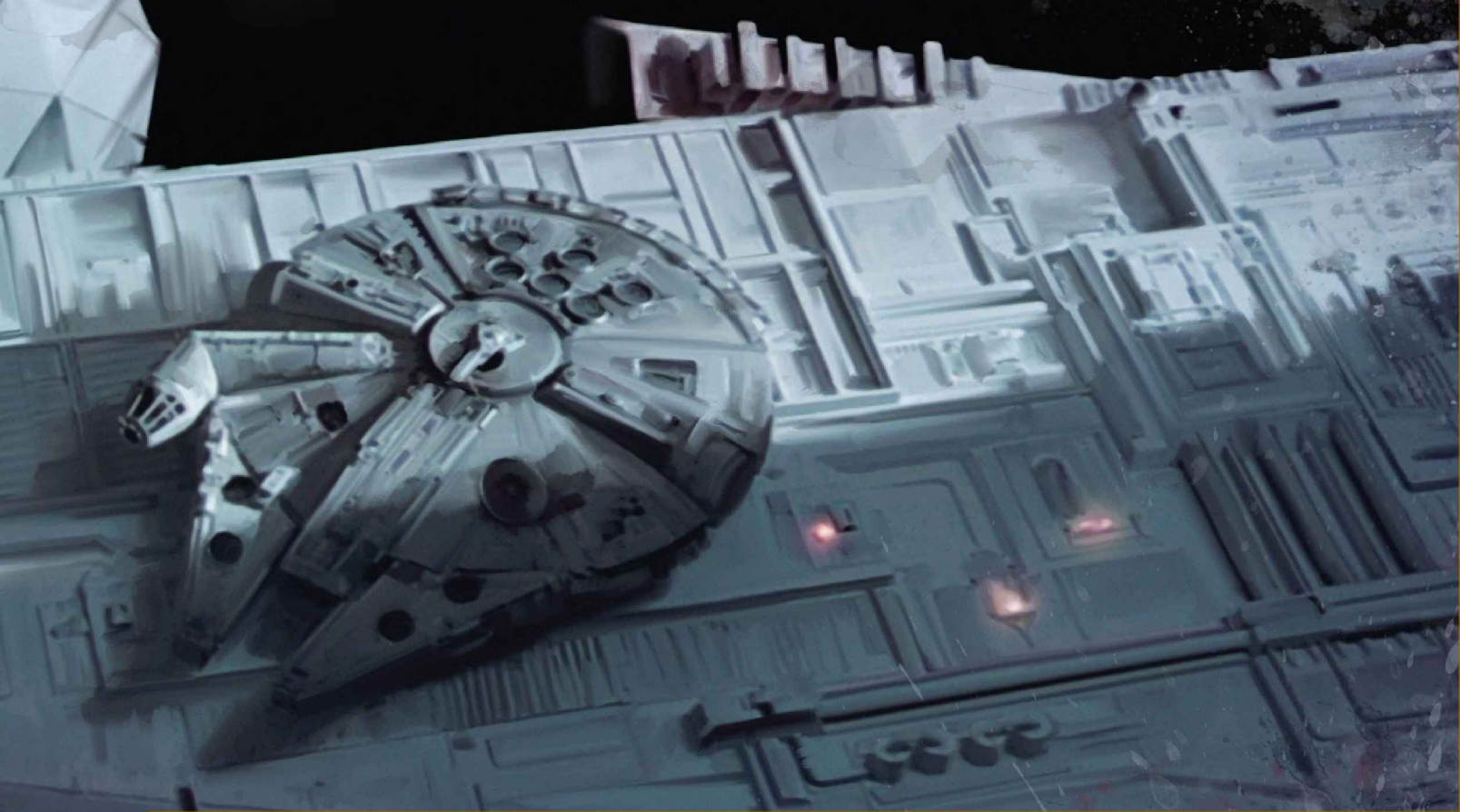
He turned on the hyperdrive.

Nothing happened . . . again.

The drive was still broken. The mynocks had ruined their chances of escaping.

“It’s not fair,” Han moaned.





The Imperial ships fired laser bolt after laser bolt at the *Falcon*. It was time for desperate action. Han turned the ship around and flew directly at the Imperial Star Destroyers.

“You’re going to attack them?” Leia said, shocked.

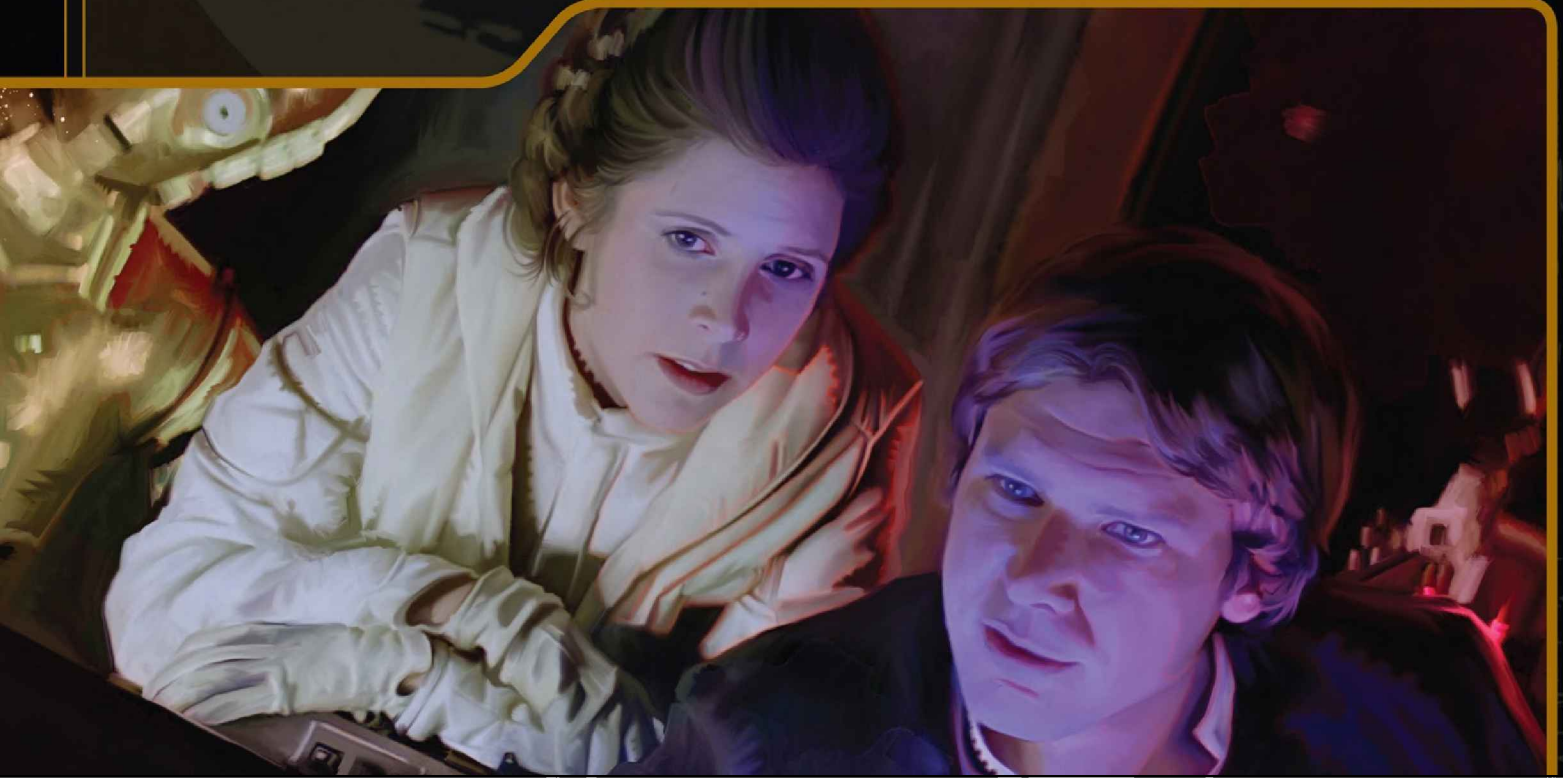
But Han had a different plan. The *Falcon* skimmed along the top of one of the huge Imperial ships and quietly landed on it. By hiding right on the enemy ship, the *Falcon* was now invisible to the Empire’s sensors.

Han, Leia, Chewie, and C-3PO waited until the Star Destroyer carried them far from the asteroid field. And when the Imperial ship dumped its garbage, the *Falcon* floated away, hidden in a cloud of debris. Han's daring plan had worked! They had finally escaped the Imperial ships.

They were safe.

Leia smiled and sighed with relief.

"You do have your moments," she told Han. "Not many, but you have them."





Size Matters Not

“L uke . . .”

Luke Skywalker lay where he had fallen in the snow on the ice planet Hoth. He was lost, and he was so cold. So tired. He couldn't keep his eyes open.

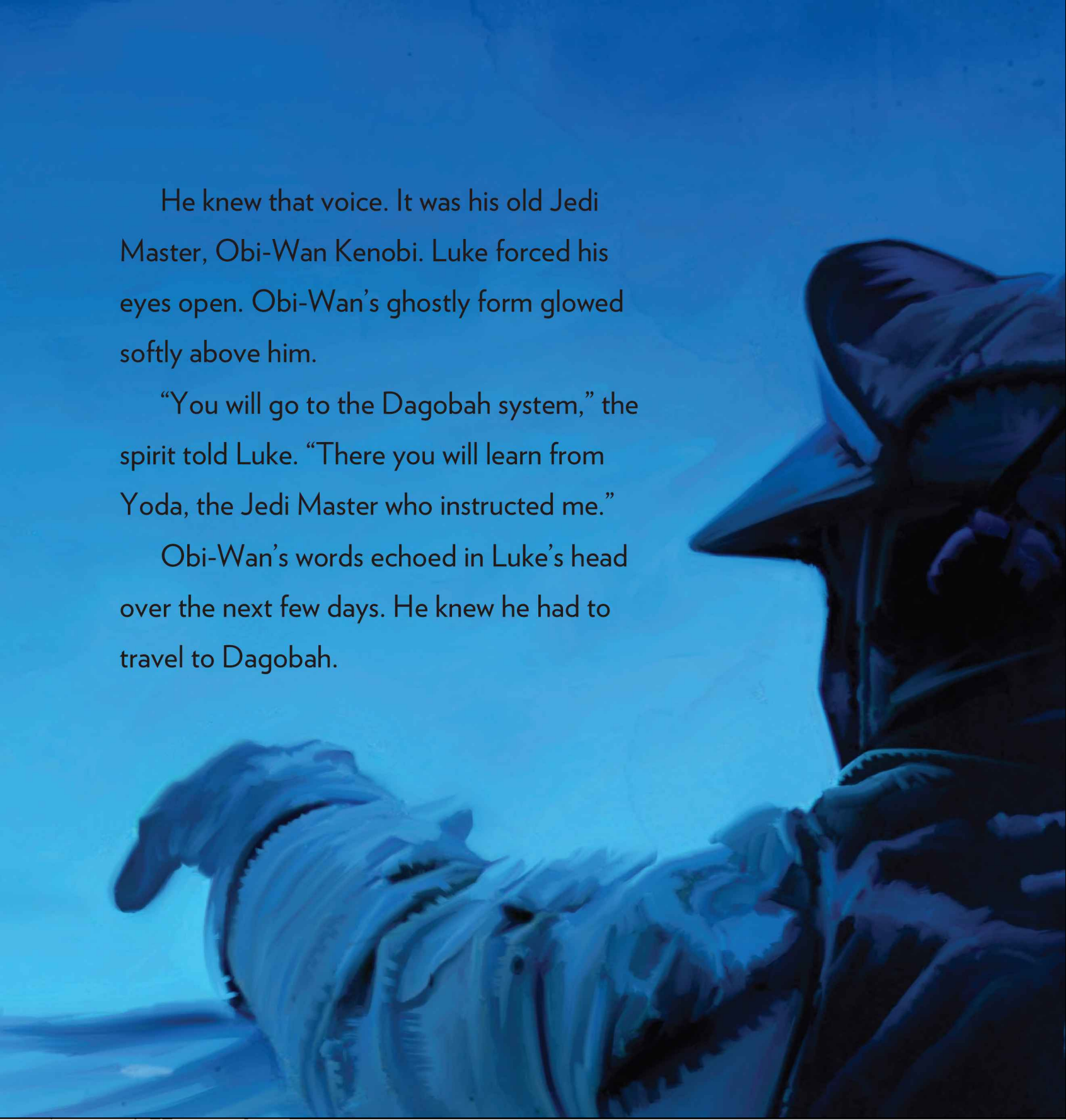
“Luke.”



He knew that voice. It was his old Jedi Master, Obi-Wan Kenobi. Luke forced his eyes open. Obi-Wan's ghostly form glowed softly above him.

"You will go to the Dagobah system," the spirit told Luke. "There you will learn from Yoda, the Jedi Master who instructed me."

Obi-Wan's words echoed in Luke's head over the next few days. He knew he had to travel to Dagobah.



R2-D2, Luke's astromech droid, didn't like this one bit. As Luke flew his X-wing toward the planet, R2-D2 beeped anxiously.

"No," Luke replied, "I'm not going to change my mind about this."

More than anything, Luke wanted to be a Jedi Knight. Obi-Wan had taught him about the Force and about using his lightsaber. But then Obi-Wan had died. Luke knew he needed a Jedi Master who could complete his training.

He had to find Yoda.





Dagobah was covered in fog, and the ground was impossible to see. Luke lost control of his X-wing as he landed. The ship splashed down in a swamp, half underwater.

“You stay put,” Luke told R2-D2. “I’ll have a look around.”



Luke made sure the area was safe, then set up camp. Still, there was something strange about the place. “I feel like—” he started.

“Feel like what?” a croaky voice interrupted him.

Luke whirled around, drawing his blaster.

“Like we’re being watched,” Luke finished. He saw a creature that was small and wrinkly, with huge ears and green skin.

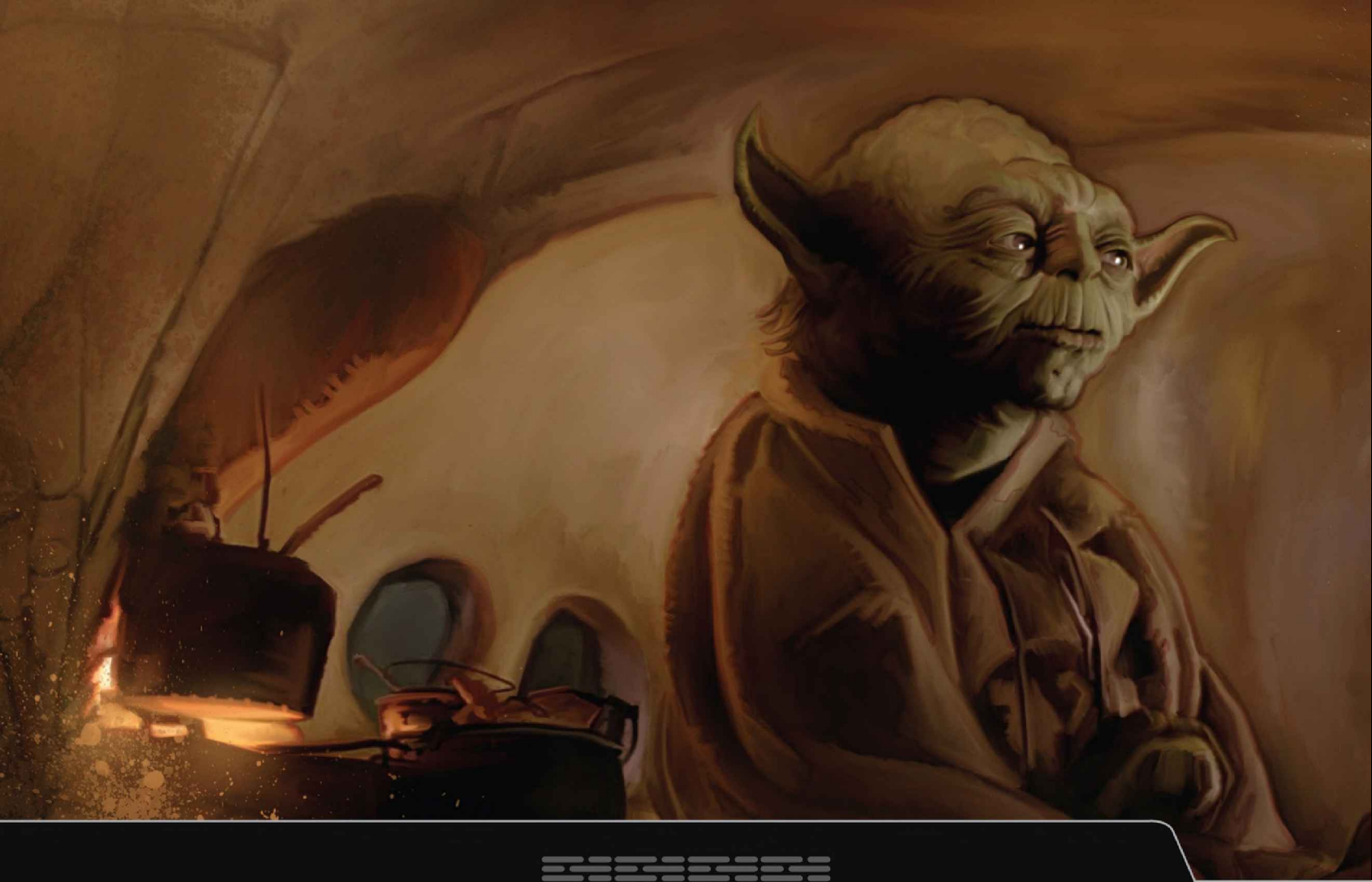
“Away put your weapon!” it said. “I mean you no harm. Help you, I can.”

Luke doubted very much that this strange little creature could help him. “I’m looking for a Jedi Master,” he explained.

“Yoda,” the creature replied. “You seek Yoda. Take you to him, I will.”

He led Luke through the swamp to his small mud hut.





Luke was getting impatient. The little green creature still hadn't told him when he would get to meet Yoda.

"Will it take us long to get there?" Luke asked.

"Yoda not far," the creature answered. He puttered around, making dinner. But Luke wanted to see Yoda right away.



“We’re wasting our time!” Luke said, annoyed.

The creature looked annoyed, too. “I cannot teach him,” he said, seemingly to someone else. “The boy has no patience.”

“He will learn patience,” replied a voice—Obi-Wan Kenobi’s voice!

“Much anger in him, like his father,” the creature said. “He is not ready.”

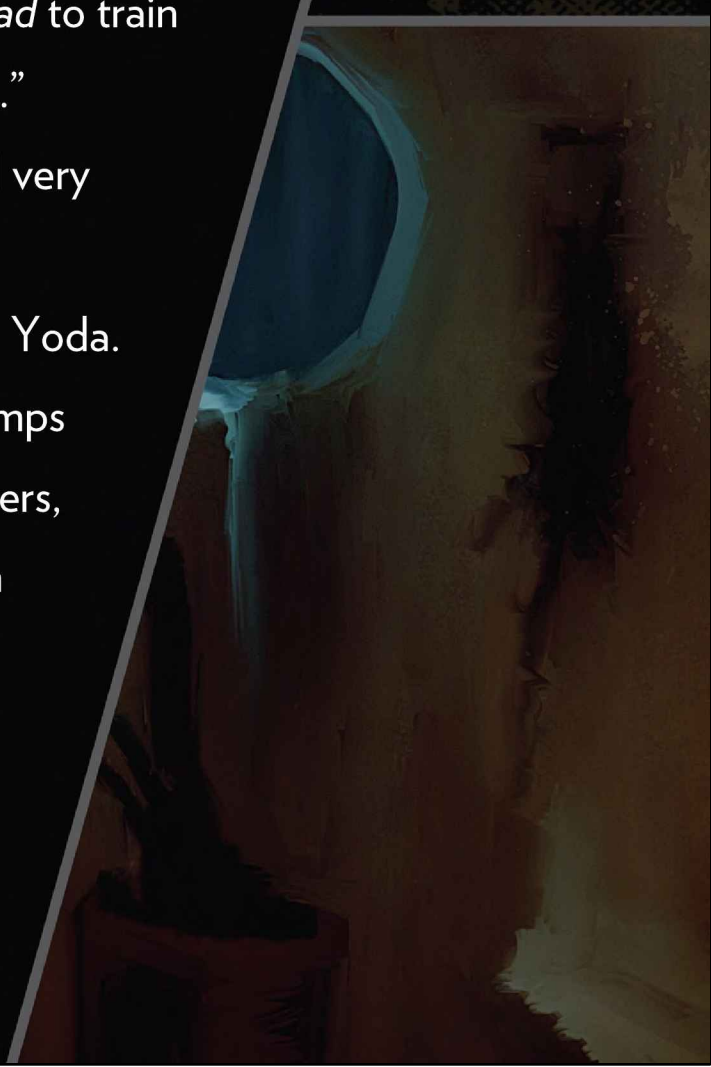
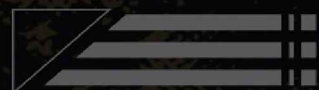
Suddenly, Luke understood. The small green creature was Yoda himself! And Yoda didn't seem impressed with him.

"Adventure," Yoda said scornfully. "Excitement. Ha! A Jedi craves not these things."

"I won't fail you," Luke said. Yoda just *had* to train him. He'd come all that way! "I'm not afraid."

"Oh, you will be," Yoda said. He looked very stern. "You will be."

Luke threw himself into his training with Yoda. He spent his days running through the swamps of Dagobah with Yoda riding on his shoulders, doing his best to let the Force flow through him. Every day he got a bit better. But the training took everything he had. Luke had never been so tired in his entire life.



“A Jedi’s strength flows from the Force,” Yoda told him as they ran. “But beware of the dark side. Consume you it will, as it did Obi-Wan’s apprentice.”

“Vader,” Luke said. He knew that Darth Vader had once been a Jedi, before he went to the dark side.

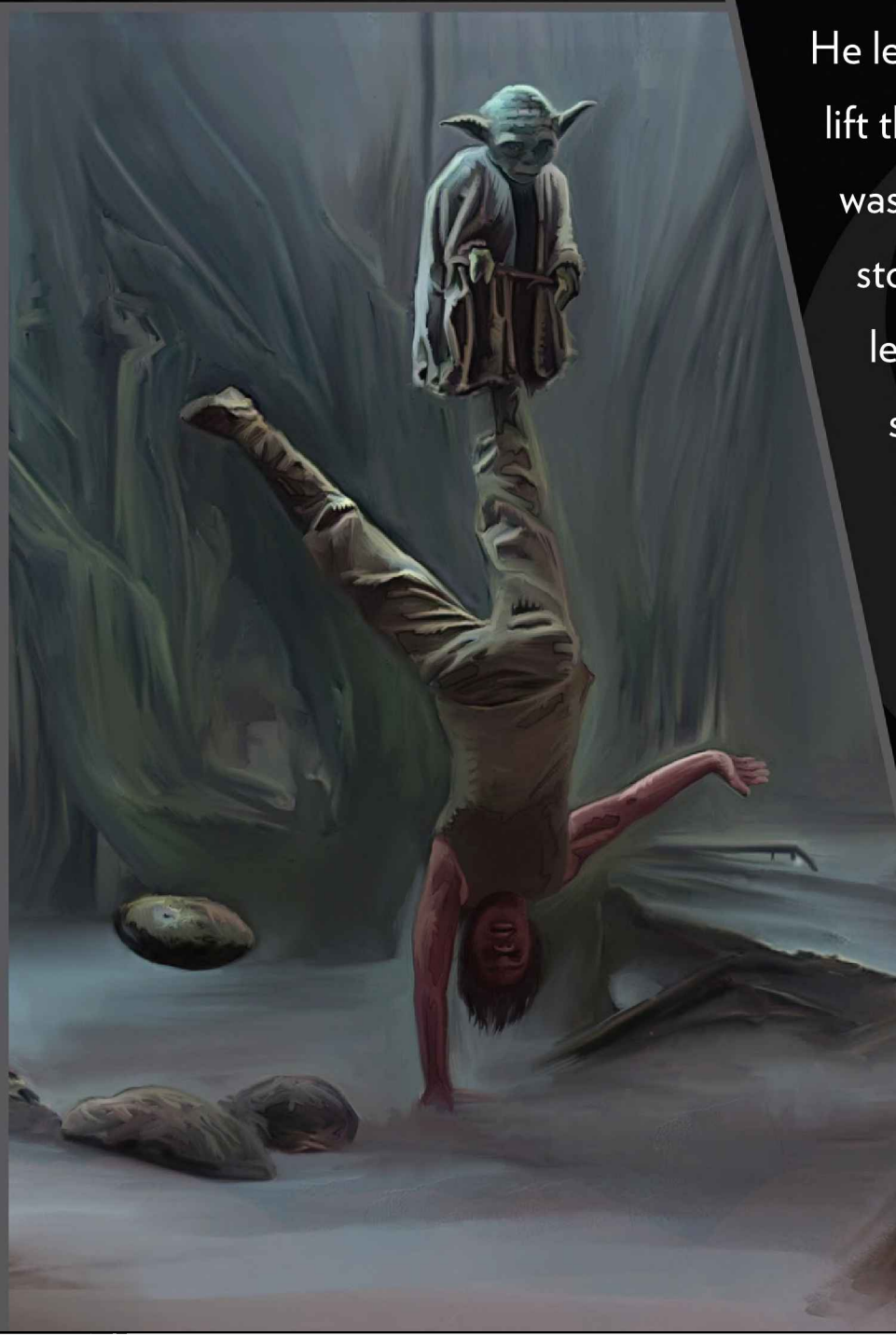




One day, Luke and Yoda came to a cave in the swamp where the dark side was strong. Inside the cave was like a dream. Luke battled and defeated Darth Vader. And then he saw his own face revealed behind Vader's mask.

The duel was a test from Yoda.

And he hadn't passed. He had attacked Vader with fear and anger rather than trusting the Force. Instead of destroying Vader, he had only destroyed himself.



Luke continued his training. He learned to use the Force to lift things into the air. At first it was small things, like sticks and stones. Soon Luke was able to levitate larger stones . . . while standing on his hands . . . with Yoda balanced on one of his feet! Luke felt pretty proud of himself.

Gurgle! Blorp!

Everything tumbled down as Luke's concentration broke. His ship was sinking into the bog!



Yoda told Luke to use the Force to raise his ship out of the bog.

“All right,” Luke said. “I’ll give it a try.”

“No!” Yoda said. “Do. Or do not. There is no try.”

Luke reached out with the Force, straining to keep the ship afloat.

For a moment, the craft rose a few inches out of the murky water. But soon Luke lost focus, and the ship sank completely. “It’s too big,” he said, defeated.

“Size matters not,” Yoda said.

“Judge me by my size, do you? And where you should not, because my ally is the Force.”

Yoda closed his eyes and extended his hand. Luke felt the Force ripple and bend around the tiny Jedi Master.



SIZE MATTERS NOT

He watched his X-wing begin to rise out of the swamp, water pouring off its wings. Soon the ship was back on dry ground.

“I don’t believe it!” Luke said.

“*That* is why you fail,” Yoda replied.





Luke continued his training more determined than ever. One day, the Force showed him a vision of Han Solo and Princess Leia . . . and they were in trouble! They had been captured by Darth Vader.

“I’ve got to go to them!” Luke cried. He needed to save his friends.

“It is the future you see,” Yoda explained.

But Yoda didn’t want him to go. “You must complete the training!” he told Luke.

Then Obi-Wan appeared. He agreed with Yoda.

“This is a dangerous time for you,” Obi-Wan said, “when you will be tempted by the dark side of the Force.”

Luke had failed his test in the cave. He had failed to raise the X-wing. Yoda and Obi-Wan feared Luke would fail against Vader.

But Luke would not listen. He climbed into his ship, where R2-D2 was already waiting for him.





"I'll return," Luke told Yoda. "I promise."

He steered the X-wing up into space, away from Dagobah and toward his trapped friends.

"Told you, I did," Yoda said to Obi-Wan. "Reckless is he."

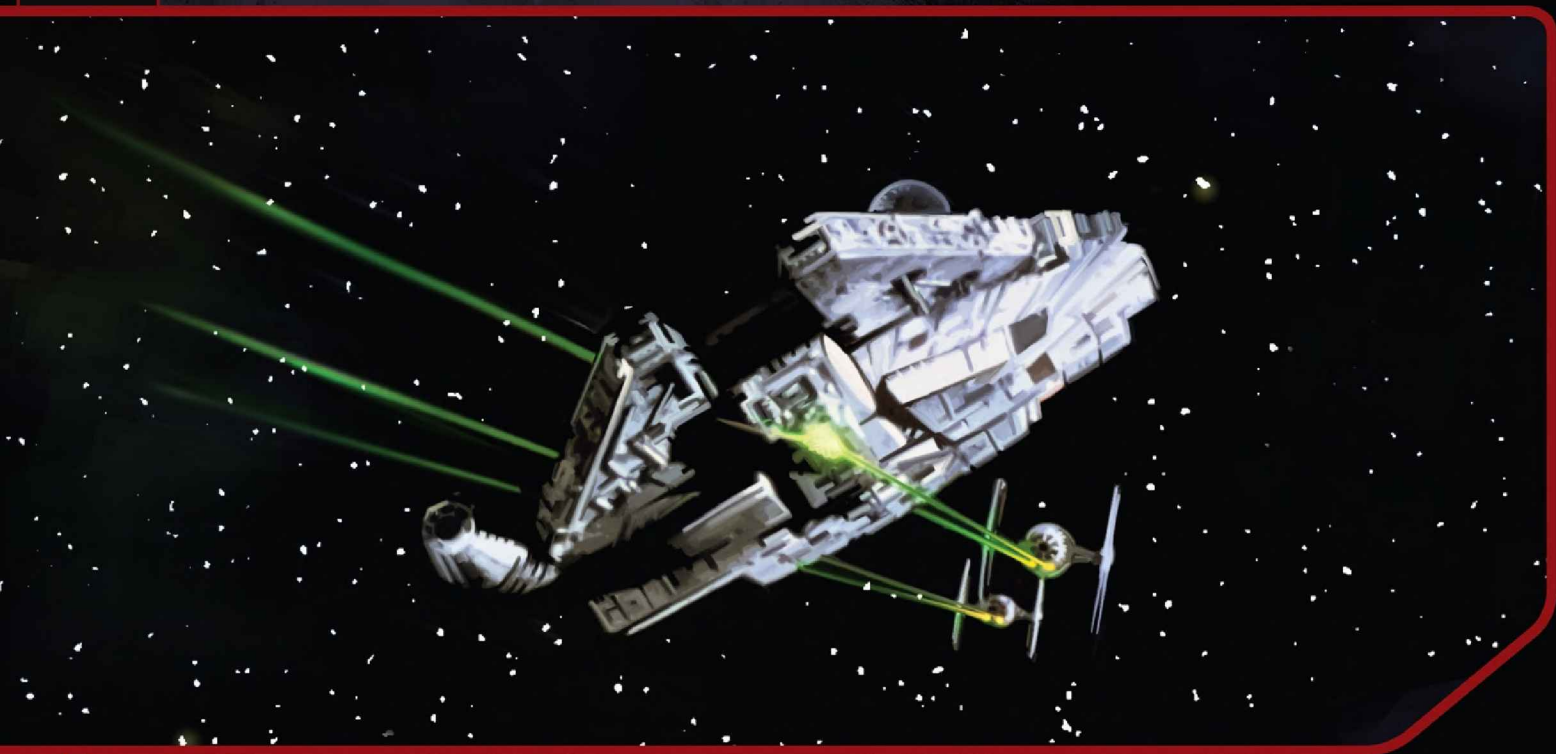
"That boy is our last hope," Obi-Wan said. The fate of the entire galaxy rested on the shoulders of Luke Skywalker.

But Yoda knew that Luke was not alone. "No," he corrected Obi-Wan. "There is another." And the Force would be with them both.





Betrayal at Bespin



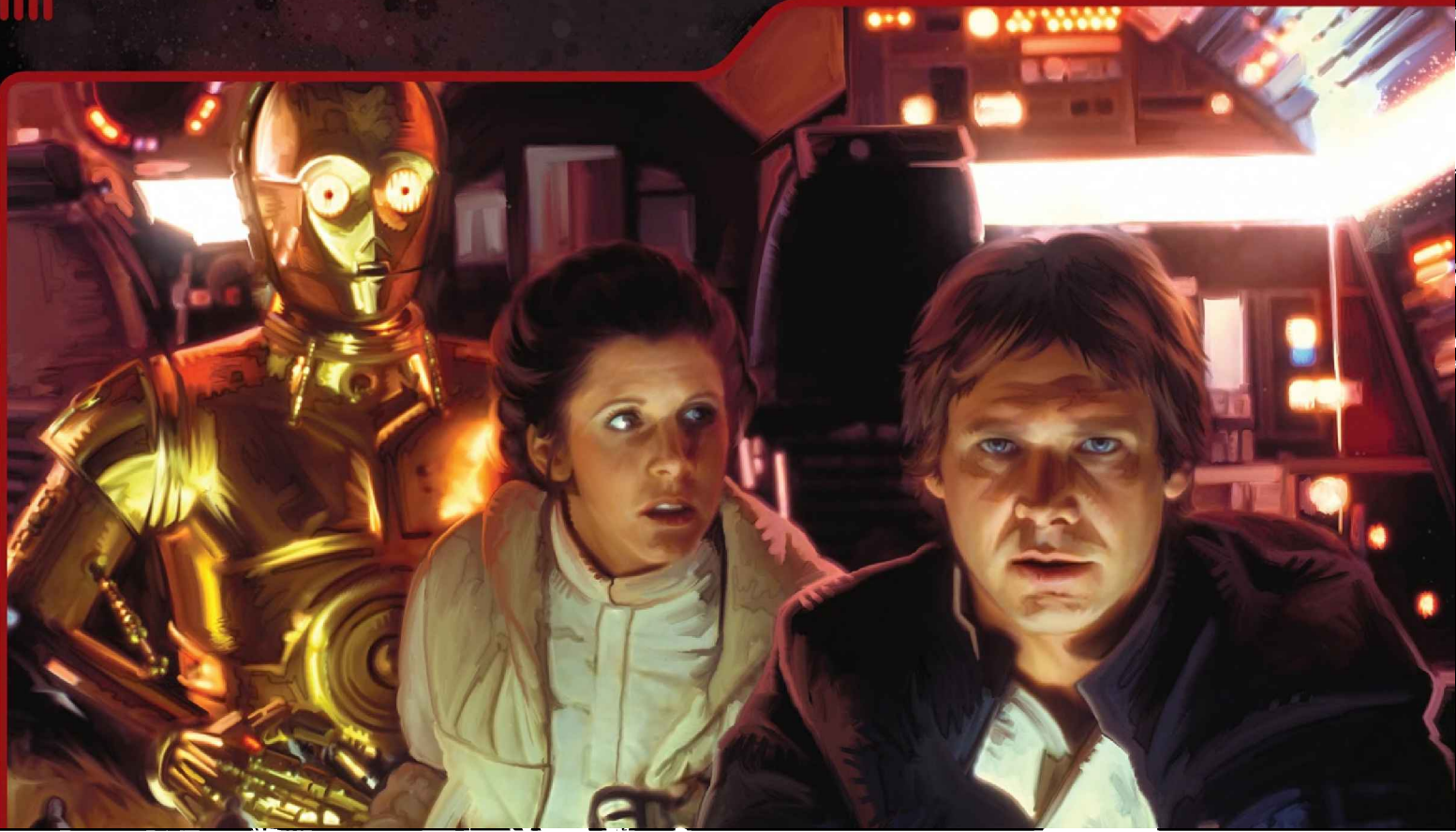
Han Solo was on the run. He and his Wookiee copilot, Chewbacca, were being chased by the evil lord Darth Vader. Vader wanted them for helping the Rebels.

Han was also on the run from the slimy gangster Jabba the Hutt. Jabba wanted them because Han owed him money.

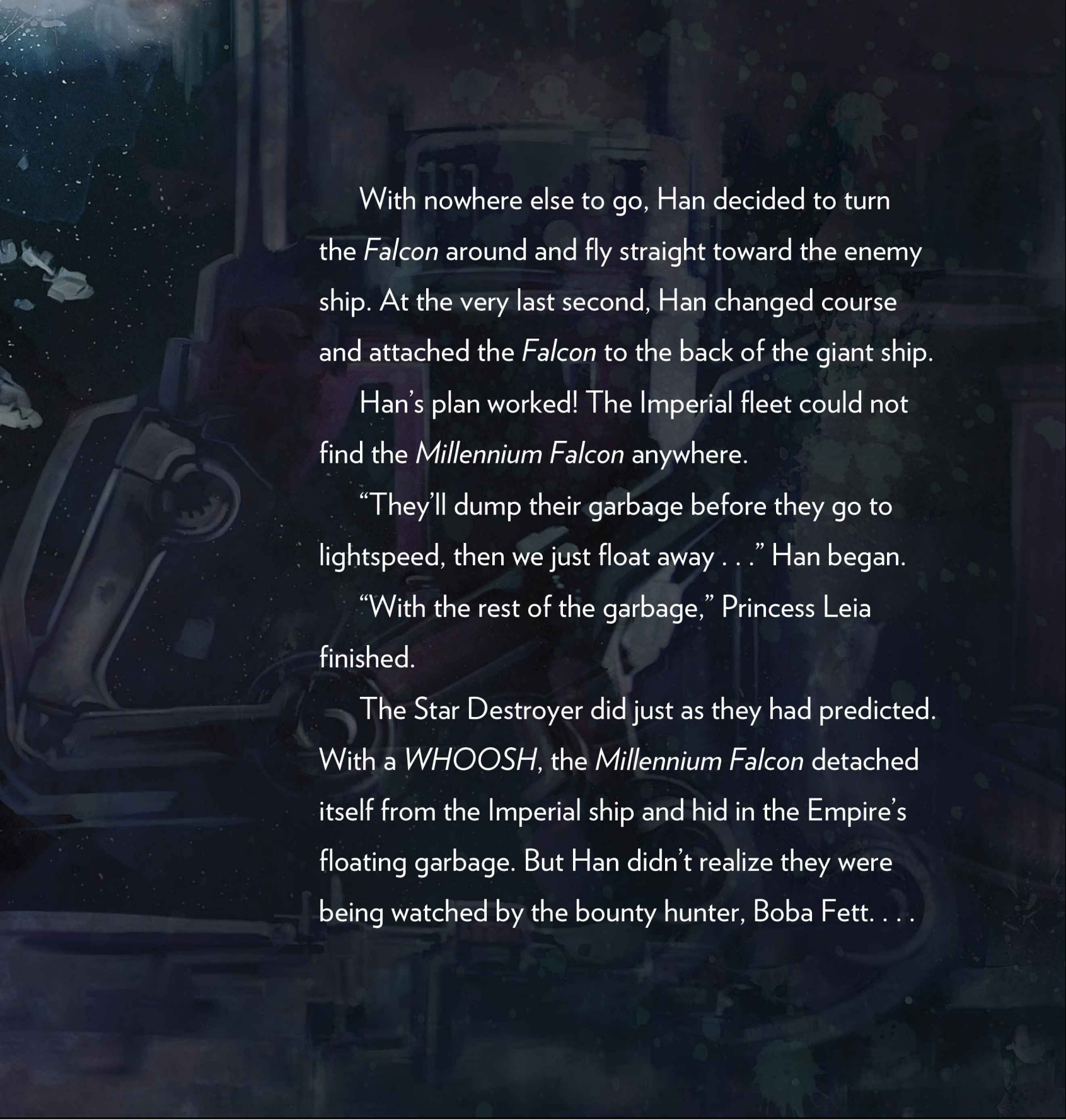
It seemed as if there was nowhere in the galaxy left for Han to run. . . .

BETRAYAL AT BESPIN

As Han's ship, the *Millennium Falcon*, evaded the Imperial TIE fighters, Han regretted his decision to help Princess Leia and C-3PO. He had aided them in their escape from the Rebels' hidden base on the ice planet Hoth. Now, after zigzagging the *Falcon* through a dangerous asteroid field *and* almost being eaten by a giant space slug, Han desperately tried to figure out how to survive against an Imperial Star Destroyer.







With nowhere else to go, Han decided to turn the *Falcon* around and fly straight toward the enemy ship. At the very last second, Han changed course and attached the *Falcon* to the back of the giant ship.

Han's plan worked! The Imperial fleet could not find the *Millennium Falcon* anywhere.

"They'll dump their garbage before they go to lightspeed, then we just float away . . ." Han began.

"With the rest of the garbage," Princess Leia finished.

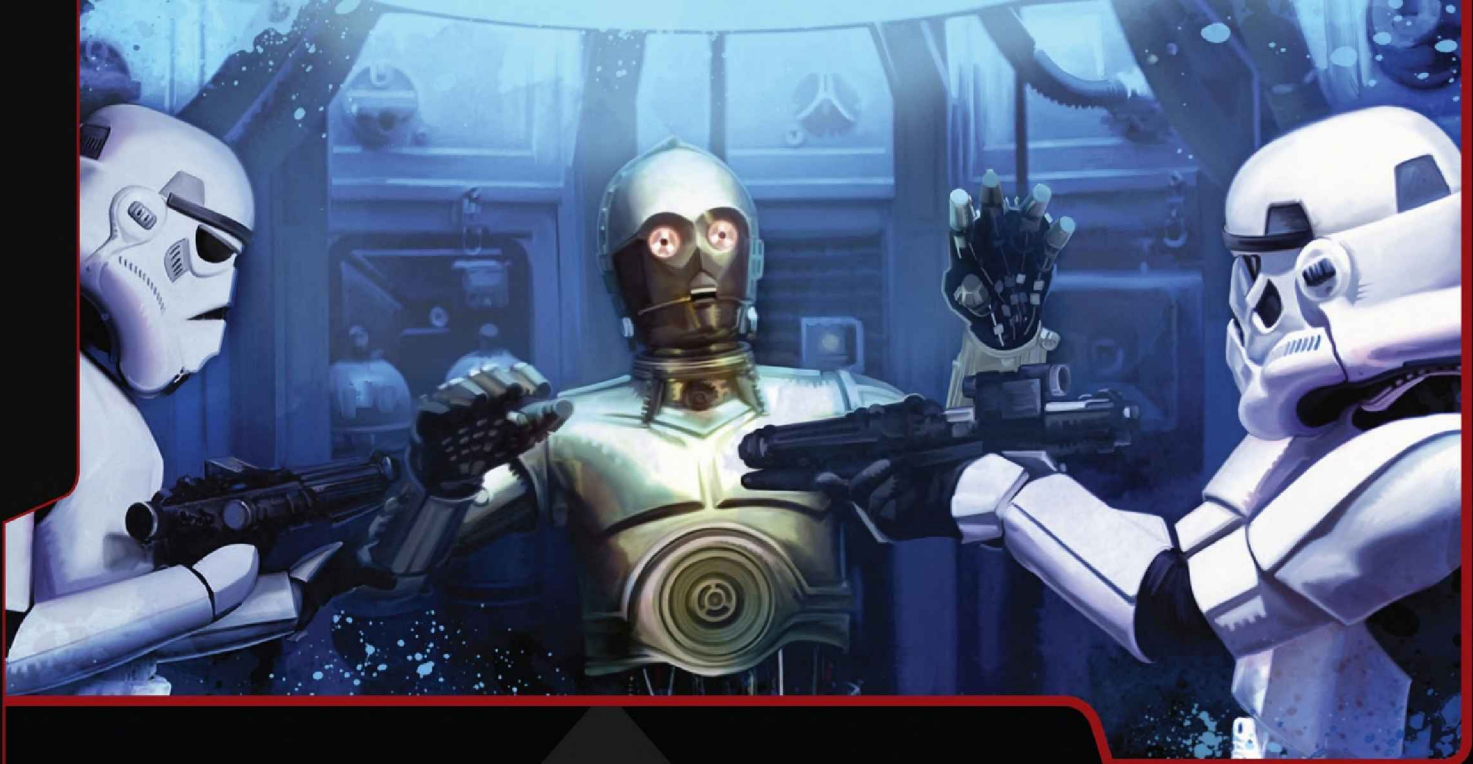
The Star Destroyer did just as they had predicted. With a *WHOOSH*, the *Millennium Falcon* detached itself from the Imperial ship and hid in the Empire's floating garbage. But Han didn't realize they were being watched by the bounty hunter, Boba Fett. . . .



Han needed to find a safe place to repair the *Falcon's* malfunctioning hyperdrive, so he flew to Bespin, where his old friend Lando Calrissian was an administrator. Han hadn't seen Lando in years, but he was sure that his friend shared a similar dislike of the Empire. Sure enough, when the Falcon landed, a smiling Lando welcomed them to Cloud City.







As Lando gave them a tour of Cloud City, C-3PO thought he heard the familiar whistle of an R2 unit. He broke off from the group to find the little droid but instead found a secret squadron of Imperial stormtroopers.

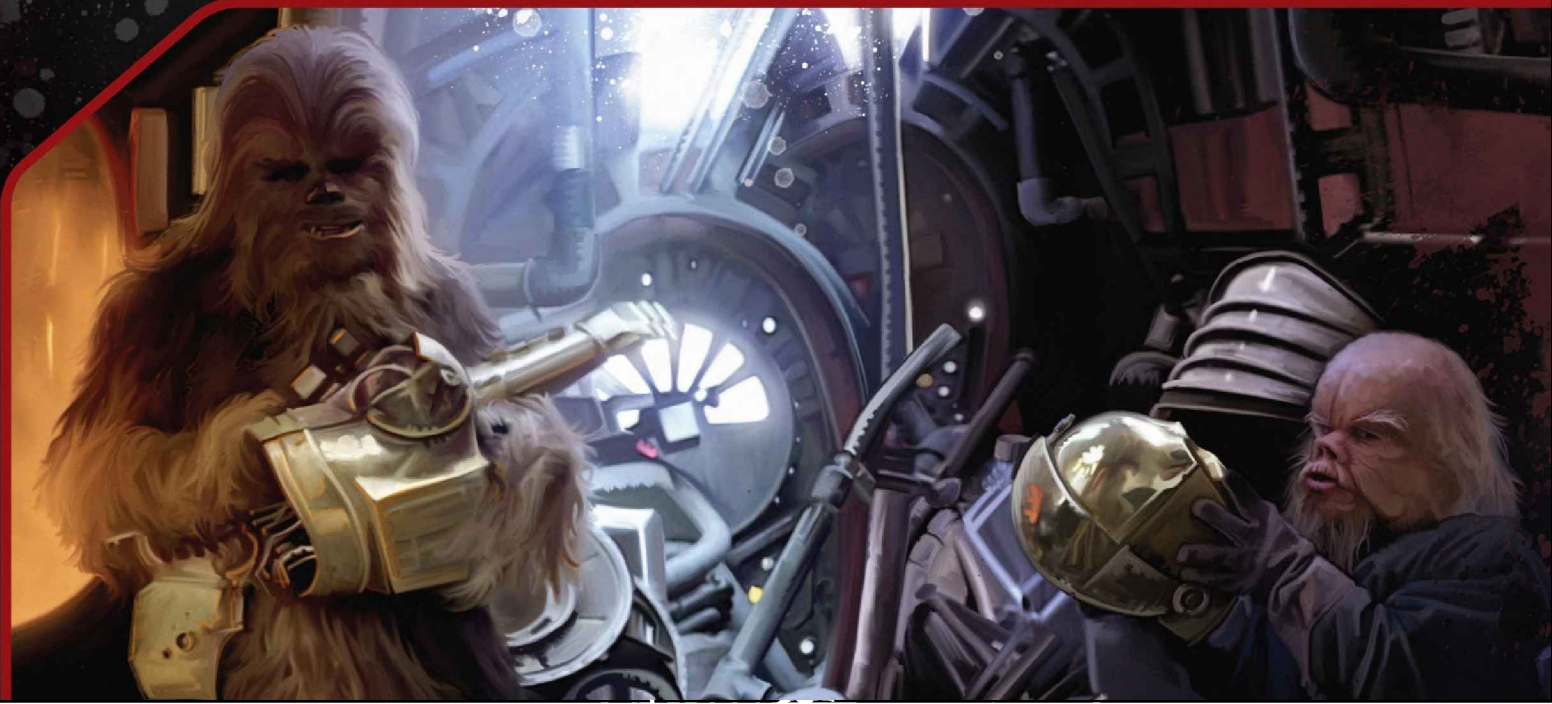
“I’m terribly sorry,” C-3PO began. “I didn’t mean to intrude—” But it was too late. With one shot, C-3PO was scattered into a dozen pieces and tossed away.

Chewbacca went back to find the protocol droid, but C-3PO was nowhere in sight. This bothered the Wookiee.



Chewbacca kept searching for C-3PO until he came to a junk room filled with spare parts. The Ugnaughts—short, hoglike creatures—were inspecting the junk. Chewbacca was surprised to see pieces of C-3PO mixed in with the spare parts. Chewbacca roared, then gathered all the pieces of his broken friend. He quickly brought the parts back to Han and Leia.

“What a mess. Chewie, do you think you can repair him?” Princess Leia asked. Chewie shrugged and let out a moan. Then Lando entered and invited everyone to join him for some refreshments.



As Lando led the group to the dining hall, he told them that he had just made a deal that would keep the Empire out of Cloud City forever. Then the doors to the dining hall opened, and at the far end of the grand banquet table was the most fearsome villain in the galaxy: Lord Darth Vader.

Han drew his blaster and fired three quick blasts. But Vader held up his right hand and effortlessly deflected them.

“We would be honored if you would join us,” Vader said calmly as the bounty hunter Boba Fett stepped into view. Han, Leia, and Chewbacca were now prisoners of the Empire.



BETRAYAL AT BESPIN





BETRAYAL AT BESPIN

Inside a cell, Chewbacca sat with the broken pieces of C-3PO. He attached the droid's head to its upper body. C-3PO sprang to life and recounted his last memory.

"Stormtroopers? Here? We're in danger. I must tell the others."

Meanwhile, things were getting worse for Han.

"You may take Captain Solo to Jabba the Hutt after I have Skywalker," Darth Vader told Boba Fett.

Lando protested: he had never agreed to give Han to the bounty hunter!



When Lando entered Han and Leia's cell to check on them, Leia asked him about their fate.

"He's after somebody called Skywalker," Lando said. "Lord Vader has set a trap for him."

"And we're the bait!" Leia replied.

"I've done all I can," Lando said. "I'm sorry I couldn't do more, but I've got my own problems."





Meanwhile, Vader examined a massive freezing chamber in the bowels of Cloud City. “This facility is crude, but it should be adequate enough to freeze Skywalker for his journey to the Emperor,” Vader said. But first, Darth Vader suggested that they test it . . . on Han Solo.

Moments later, stormtroopers marched Han, Leia, and Chewbacca—with C-3PO strapped to his back—into the carbon freezing chamber to watch the grand experiment.

Han was moved into position and lowered into the chamber. Machines ground together and screeched, smoke billowed, and Chewbacca howled.

When the smoke cleared, Han was lifted from the pit. He was encased in a rectangular tomb of carbon.





“He’s alive, and in perfect hibernation,” Lando said, relieved.

Darth Vader instructed Lando to take the princess and the Wookiee to his Star Destroyer. Vader had altered the plan—again—

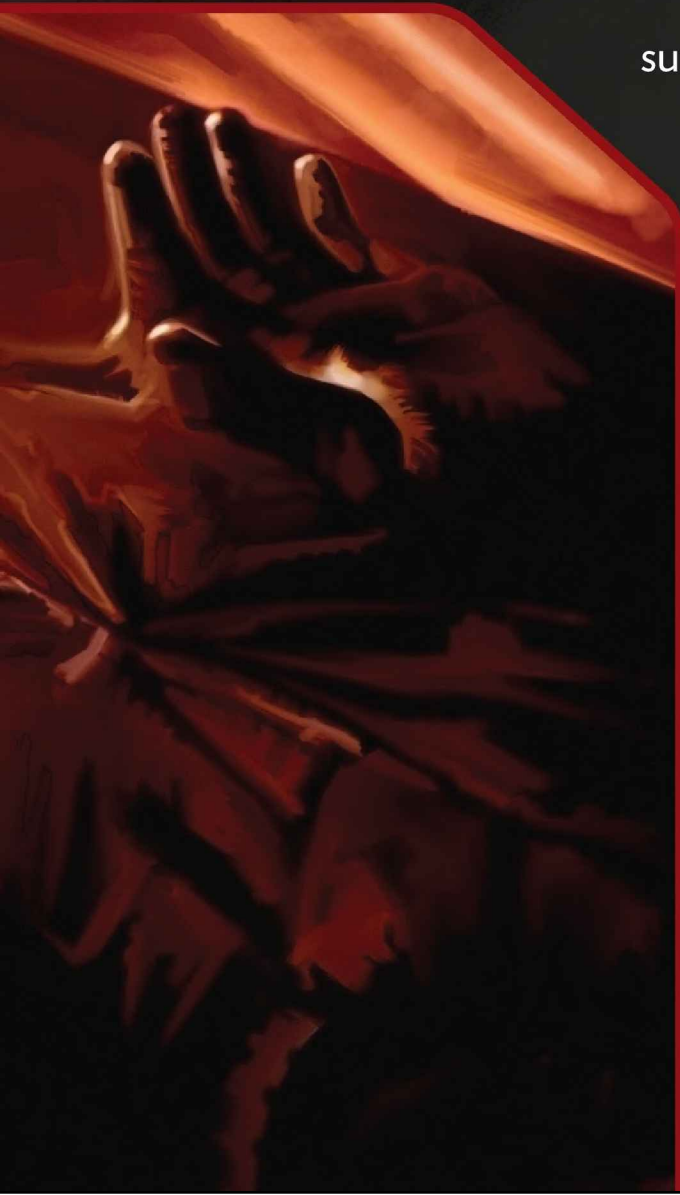


and Lando feared that things were only going to get worse. He quietly signaled to his aid, Lobot.

As Lando led the stormtroopers, Leia, and Chewie through the corridor, Cloud City's security guards quickly surrounded them. "Well done," Lando said to Lobot, who had joined them. "Hold them in the security tower—and keep it quiet."

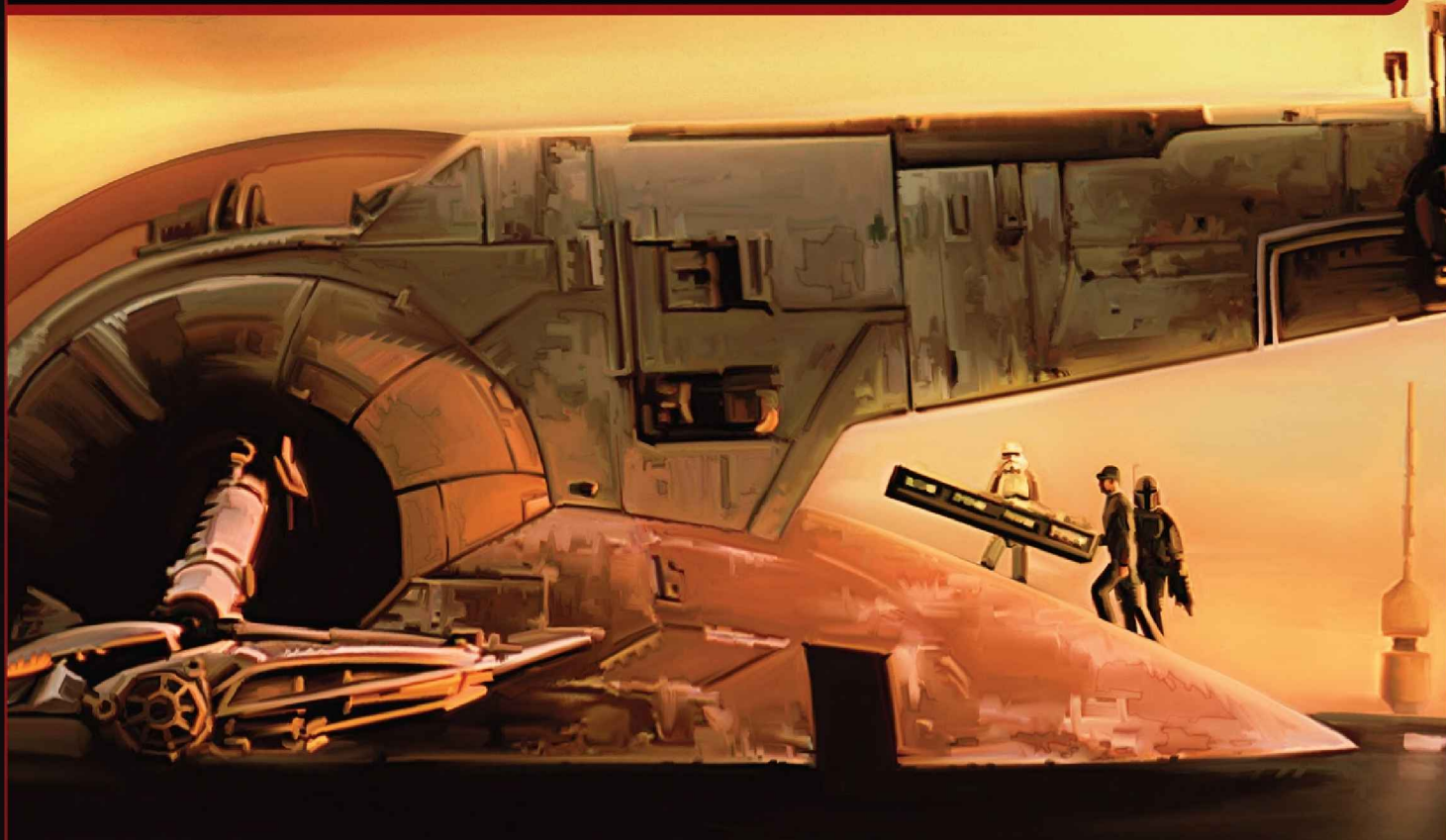
But as the guards took the Imperials away, Chewbacca immediately began to choke Lando for turning them over to the Empire. Leia looked on as Lando desperately tried to speak.

"There's still a chance to save Han . . ." he said through strained breaths. "At the east platform . . ."



Chewbacca released Lando, and they all ran toward the east platform, but they were too late. Boba Fett had finished loading Han into his ship and flown away.

Han's worst fears had come true. With nowhere left to run, he had finally been captured. But that was not the end of Han Solo. Han's friends were already working on a rescue mission. . . . All they had to do was escape from Cloud City—and Darth Vader!





The Revelation

As Luke Skywalker's X-wing approached Cloud City, the young Jedi could sense trouble through the Force. Master Yoda had warned Luke not to leave Dagobah before his training was complete, but he had no choice. Luke's friends were in danger, and they needed him.

After landing, Luke moved through the quiet hallways of the floating city. Luke drew his blaster, and just in time. The bounty hunter Boba Fett fired on Luke, missing him only by a few inches.

"Luke!" Princess Leia shouted.
"Don't—it's a trap!"

Boba Fett fired on Luke again.
Luke ducked behind a wall but caught

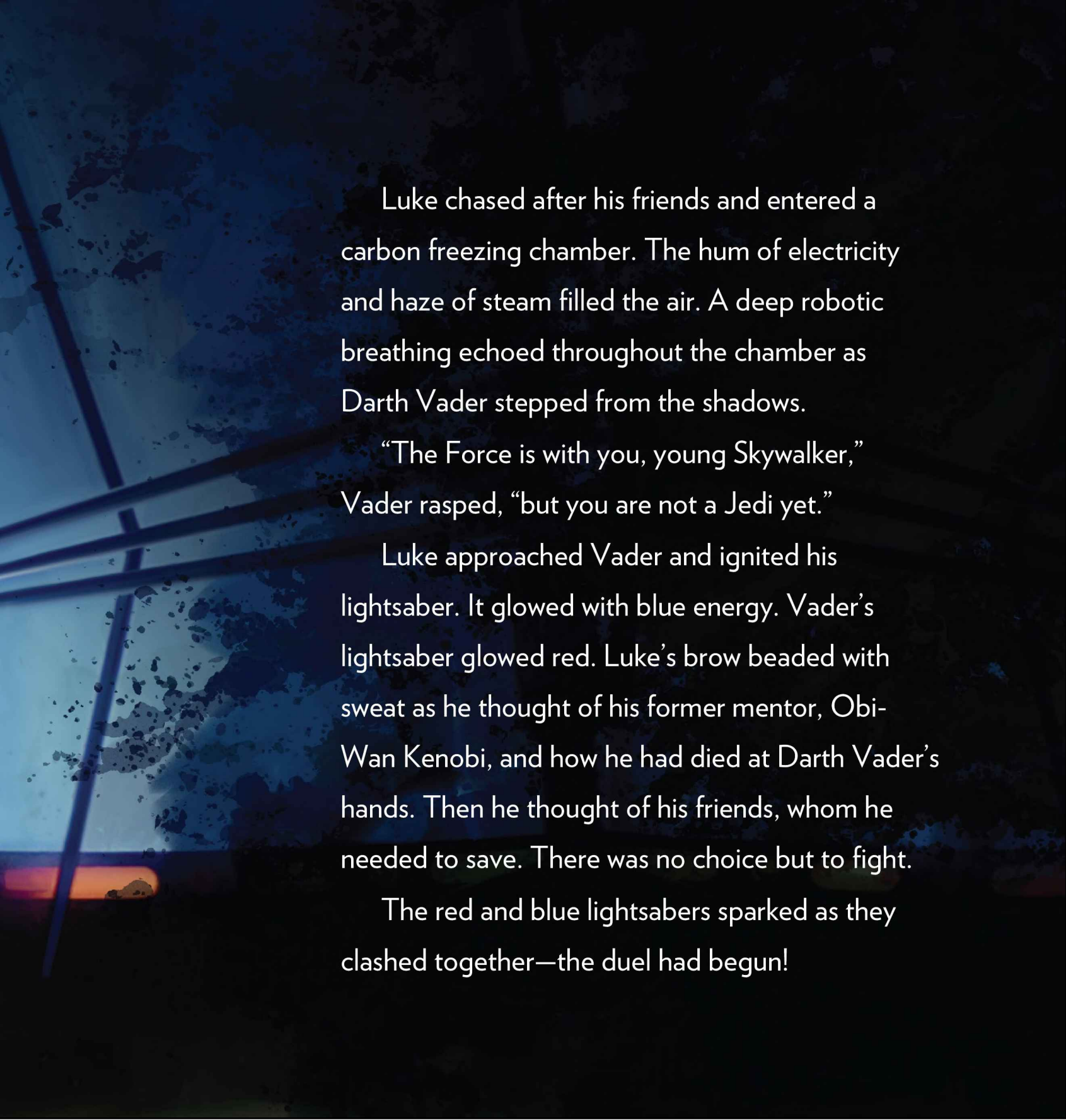


THE REVELATION

a glimpse of his friends being led away by Imperial stormtroopers. Leia, Chewbacca, and C-3PO—along with Han Solo, frozen in carbonite—were prisoners. Luke had to find a way to help them!







Luke chased after his friends and entered a carbon freezing chamber. The hum of electricity and haze of steam filled the air. A deep robotic breathing echoed throughout the chamber as Darth Vader stepped from the shadows.

“The Force is with you, young Skywalker,” Vader rasped, “but you are not a Jedi yet.”

Luke approached Vader and ignited his lightsaber. It glowed with blue energy. Vader’s lightsaber glowed red. Luke’s brow beaded with sweat as he thought of his former mentor, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and how he had died at Darth Vader’s hands. Then he thought of his friends, whom he needed to save. There was no choice but to fight.

The red and blue lightsabers sparked as they clashed together—the duel had begun!



Elsewhere in the city, Lando Calrissian secretly summoned his guards to rush to his aid. They surrounded the stormtroopers, allowing Lando to free Princess Leia and Chewbacca. “What do you think you’re doing?” Leia asked as Lando released Chewbacca from his handcuffs.

Before Lando could answer, Chewie started choking him. Lando had betrayed their friend Han and turned him over to Darth Vader and Boba Fett. Lando couldn’t be trusted. Or could he? “There’s still a chance to save Han,” Lando said as he gasped for air. “At the east platform . . .”

THE REVELATION

Not far away, Boba Fett was loading a carbonite-frozen Han Solo onto his ship, *Slave I*. Lando, Leia, and Chewie rushed through the corridors of Cloud City to save Han.

They were almost there. As the door to the platform opened, they fired their blasters . . . but it was too late. The bounty hunter's ship rose into the sky and then flew away.

Lando and Leia decided to head to the *Millenium Falcon*. Maybe they could still catch Boba Fett.





Meanwhile, the lightsaber duel continued. “You have learned much, young one,” Darth Vader rasped as he hammered Luke Skywalker with his lightsaber attacks.

“You’ll find that I am full of surprises,” Luke said, but he was posturing. He was no match for the Sith Lord.

Vader cornered Luke, and as the young Jedi took a step back, he fell into the carbon freezing chamber. But just as he was about to be frozen, Luke used the Force to make an impossible leap.

“Impressive,” Vader said. “Obi-Wan has taught you well.

“You have controlled your fear,” said Darth Vader as he pressed his attack. “Now, release your anger. Only your hatred can destroy me!”

The battle moved through corridors, but Luke refused to give up. He had to save his friends.

But he was growing weaker every minute.





When the Sith Lord used the Force to throw large metal objects at him, Luke wasn't strong enough to dodge. He was hit again and again until Vader pushed a large metal pipe through the window. All the air was sucked out of the room—and Luke Skywalker was taken with it.



Far below, Luke clung to a metal catwalk over the central air shaft within Cloud City. Just as he climbed up, Darth Vader emerged, and the battle began again. Luke was growing weaker and weaker. “You are beaten,” Vader rasped through his helmet. “It is useless to resist.”

Luke swung his lightsaber, but Vader was faster. With one fell swoop, Vader cut off Luke Skywalker’s hand.



THE REVELATION

Luke clutched his wrist. He struggled to escape from the Sith Lord, but there was nowhere to go. He had reached the end of the catwalk.

“If you only knew the power of the dark side,” Vader hissed through his mask. “Obi-Wan never told you what happened to your father. . . .”

“He told me you killed him,” Luke snapped at his sworn enemy.

“No,” Darth Vader said, “I am your father.”

“No!” Luke shouted. “It’s not true! That’s impossible!”

Luke screamed in anguish. How could his greatest enemy, the man who had tried to hurt his friends, be his father?

“Join me,” Darth Vader said, extending his hand. “And together we can rule the galaxy as father and son.”

Luke looked around. There was no escape. He could either join his father, or he could let go.

“Come with me,” Vader instructed. “It is the only way.” Then, taking one last look at Vader, Luke let go.

Luke Skywalker fell backward into the giant chasm at the center of Cloud City. The air currents grabbed him and sucked him into the tube system, a series of pipes and vents that blew air through the floating city. Eventually, Luke was ejected, but he managed to grab hold of an antenna before he could fall to the distant clouds below.

With nowhere left to go, and not knowing what else to do, Luke reached out. Using the Force, he called to Leia.

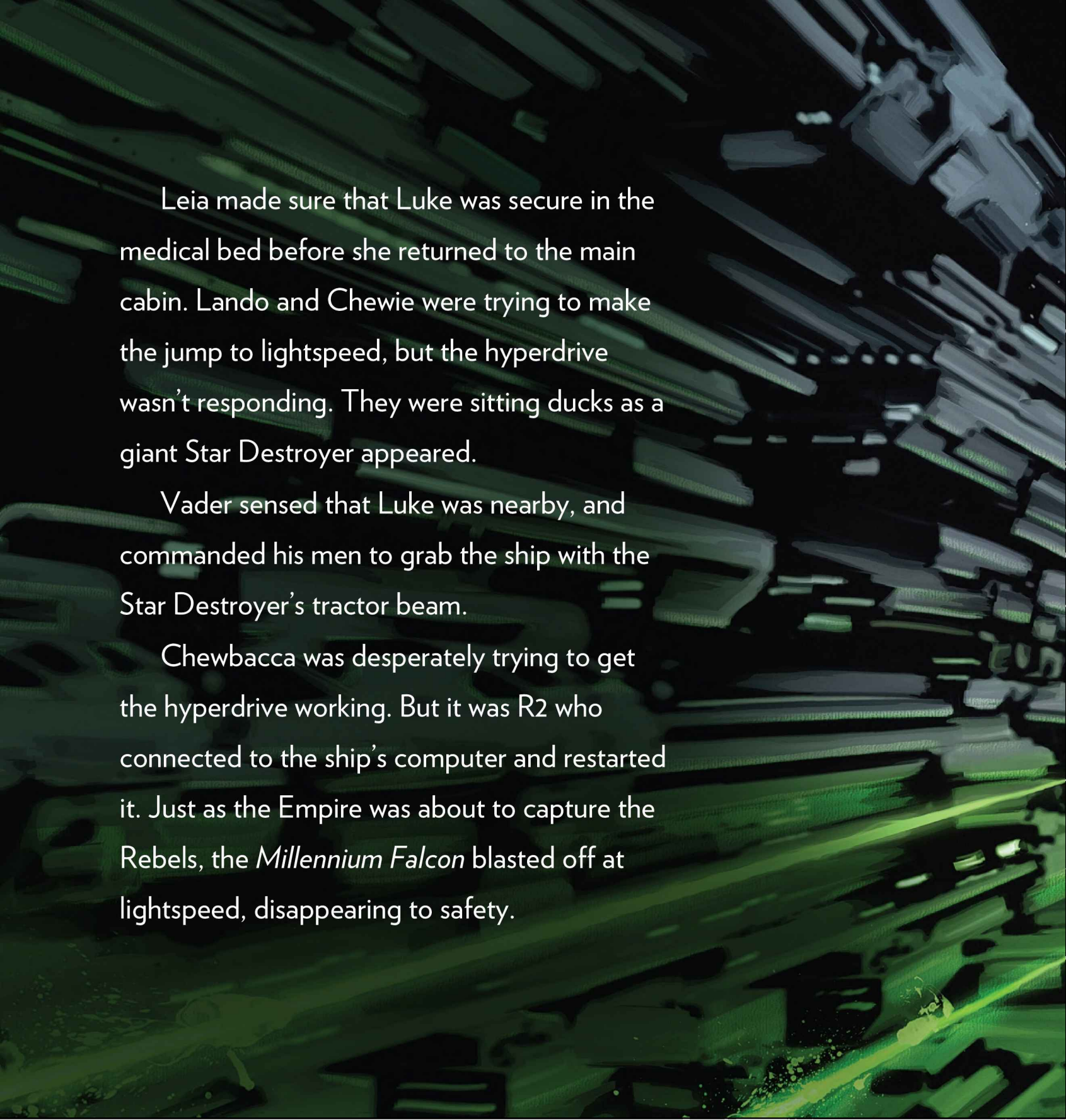


THE REVELATION

The *Millennium Falcon* was just about to break orbit when Leia felt Luke's pleas for help. "We have to go back," Leia said to Lando and Chewie. "I know where Luke is." Lando began to protest, but Chewbacca didn't listen. He had already lost one friend that day, and he was not going to lose another.

They found Luke, barely alive, hanging from the antenna. Carefully, they moved below and rescued him. And just in time, as several TIE fighters arrived to capture the escaped heroes.





Leia made sure that Luke was secure in the medical bed before she returned to the main cabin. Lando and Chewie were trying to make the jump to lightspeed, but the hyperdrive wasn't responding. They were sitting ducks as a giant Star Destroyer appeared.

Vader sensed that Luke was nearby, and commanded his men to grab the ship with the Star Destroyer's tractor beam.

Chewbacca was desperately trying to get the hyperdrive working. But it was R2 who connected to the ship's computer and restarted it. Just as the Empire was about to capture the Rebels, the *Millennium Falcon* blasted off at lightspeed, disappearing to safety.



Aboard a Rebel medical ship, Luke was fitted with a robotic hand to replace the one he had lost. Though Luke had gone to rescue his friends, it was his friends who had rescued him.

Now that they had escaped Vader, it was time to rescue Han. Lando and Chewie were leaving in the *Millennium Falcon* to find the bounty hunter who had taken their friend.

“We’ll find Han,” said Lando. “I promise.”

“May the Force be with you,” Luke replied.



